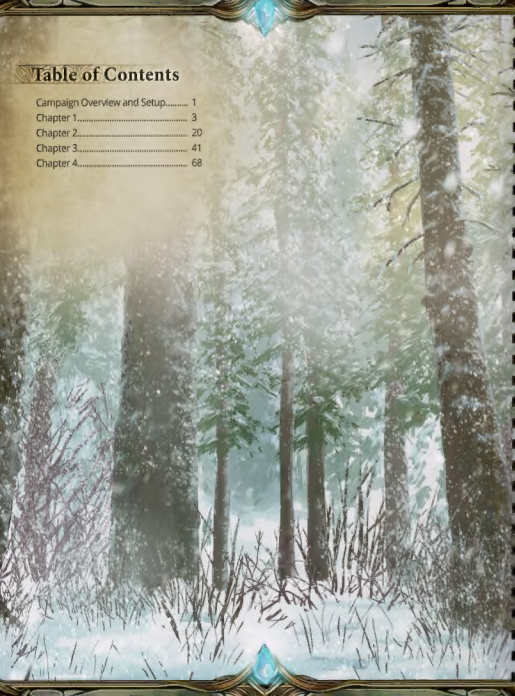
The Isofarian Guard
Campaign 3

Table of Contents

Campaign Overview and Setup..... 1
Chapter 1..... 3
Chapter 2..... 20
Chapter 3..... 41
Chapter 4..... 68



Campaign Overview & Setup

Campaign 3 begins with Kharzin and Vera just after the events of the Prologue.

Campaign 3 begins with two of the Guards. If playing solo, you'll control two Guards. If playing with another player (co-op), you can choose which player controls each Guard throughout your adventure.

Follow the setup listed on page 18 of the Rulebook.

Kharzin begins with the following stats:
Health (HP): 20
Attack (ATK): 3
Defense (DEF): 2
Action Points (AP): 2

Place the required cubes for Kharzin's stats in his Guard Dashboard.

Kharzin begins with the following equipment:
Weapon: Guard's Spear (1 Star)
Armor: Guard's Tunic (1 Star)
Accessory: None
Item: Health Potion
Satchel: None

Find his starting equipment cards in the square card index, and place them in the marked slots of the Guard Dashboard.

Kharzin begins with the following chips:
(Based on his starting stats, 3 ATK and 2 DEF)

3 X

2 X

Place Kharzin's starting chips in his bag.

Kharzin begins with the following Guard Ability Cards:
Lance Strike/Blinding Strike
Bodyguard/Bulwark
Advancement/Spear Dive

Cards are always placed with the 'Primary' (P) side up. You may place these cards in any of the six available slots on the Guard Ability Dashboard.

Kharzin also begins with a single Stonebound Ability Card: Veteran Guard

You may place 'Veteran Guard' in any available slot on the Guard Ability Dashboard. Place an 'Orange' (Earth) Speaking Stone gem in the numbered slot just below the card in its 'Ready' slot (left slot). Note that 'Veteran Guard' has an '**Star Quartz**' Speaking Stone listed on the back of the card. Find an Star Quartz Speaking Stone card from the 'Speaking Stone' section of the square card index, and place it under Kharzin's weapon (Guard's Spear) on his Guard Dashboard. Star Quartz uses the slot on the back of Guard Spear and gives Kharzin an additional 2 Health (HP).

Increase Kharzin's HP by 2 which will make his maximum HP value 22. One red cube would be placed in the '20' spot and one in the '2' spot in the HP tracks. You may use a purple cube to mark where Kharzin's maximum HP value is (since you cannot heal past this amount). Place a purple cube in the '3' spot.

Proceed to page 2 to for Vera's setup.

Campaign Overview & Setup

Vera begins with the following stats:
Health (HP): 20
Attack (ATK): 2
Defense (DEF): 1
Action Points (AP): 2

Place the required cubes for Vera's stats in her Guard Dashboard.

Vera begins with the following equipment:
Weapon: Long Bow (1 Star)
Armor: Guard's Tunic (1 Star)
Accessory: None
Item: Health Potion
Satchel: None

Find her starting equipment cards in the square card index, and place them in the marked slots of the Guard Dashboard.

Vera begins with the following chips:
(Based on her starting stats, 2 ATK and 1 DEF)

2 X

1 X

Place Vera's starting chips in her bag.

Vera begins with the following Guard Ability Cards:
Quick Shot/Covering Shot
Side Step/Multi Shot
Piercing Shot/Leaping Counter

Cards are always placed with the 'Primary' (P) side up. You may place these cards in any of the six available slots on the Guard Ability Dashboard.

NOTE: Vera's Guard Ability Cards do NOT automatically flip to their opposite sides after being activated by chips. You'll need to utilize her keyword [Burst] to flip the cards. Be sure to reference Vera's keyword in the Rulebook on page 58, or on the Player-Aid Foldout.

Vera also begins with a single Stonebound Ability Card: Tracking

You may place 'Tracking' in any available slot on the Guard Ability Dashboard. Place a 'Darkness' (Purple) Speaking Stone gem in the numbered slot just below the card in its 'Ready' slot (left slot). Note that 'Tracking' has an '**Obsidian**' Speaking Stone listed on the back of the card. Find an Obsidian Speaking Stone card from the 'Speaking Stone' section of the square card index, and place it under Vera's weapon (Long Bow) on her Guard Dashboard. Obsidian uses the slot on the back of Long Bow and gives Vera an additional chip for her bag.

Place the following chip in Vera's bag: 1X

Place the miniature for Kharzin and Vera, or their Guard Bust Chips on Node 28. Proceed to page 3 to begin Chapter 1!

Chapter 1

Chapter 1:1 Mountain Pass - Vera

"Stonebound."

You wake from the visions confused, the Voice still echoing in your head. The images that flashed through your mind brought back memories you have long suppressed: An absent father, a dead mother you barely remember, a series of orphanages run by the Circle, a line of disappointed families, your 'troubled' time, and finally, your forced recruitment into the Guard. Your whole life has not been your own, and now some strange Voice invades your head and tells you to go to some valley. It's all you can do to keep from screaming.

You emerge from your thoughts and realize Grigory is saying something. Pavel and Yana actually seem to be smiling, but you fail to see the humor in an all powerful Voice recruiting people for yet another war. You decide then and there to take back your life.

"We can all hear the Voice calling us to the valley," Grigory is saying, "and I wish to go, but I feel it is my duty as captain to warn the king of what is coming. Kharzin, you are the most experienced Guard here. I want you to lead everyone to the valley, while I travel to Silny. If I can make the king see the truth, we can strike a mighty blow against the shadow."

Kharzin looks at the captain intently, "Captain, I will do my best, but I can't help thinking you're making a mistake by trying to convince the king."

"Perhaps," Grigory replies, "But I owe it to the people of Isofar to try. They must know that the Stonebound are real. When I'm done I will meet you all in the valley."

As Grigory walks away, you can't help but be amused by the look of shock on Kharzin's face. That's when Yury takes the opportunity to run off. One second he's standing alongside everyone else, and the next, he's fifty yards away and moving as quick as an arrow.

"Where's he going?" Pavel asks, stupidly.

"Yury, come back!" Kharzin yells, to no avail.

"I'll go get him," Catherine says just before she *disappears.*

"Okay, I'm out," you declare. "You all have fun in the valley." You march away deliberately, not waiting for a reply.

Vera, where are you going?" Kharzin demands.

"Anywhere else. I didn't ask for this, I don't want it. I'm going to live my own life the way I choose."

Kharzin begins to run after you, but you wave him away.

"We have to go to the valley!" Pavel calls out. You look back and see Yana standing by his side with her arms crossed.

"You can all do what you want. I'm not going to let some disembodied Voice tell me what to do."

"And what about your captain then?" Kharzin asks.

"I don't see him here either!" You spin around and continue marching away.

"Well, we're going to the valley," Yana states. "I don't know how you can ignore the Voice after what we've just witnessed."

You turn back and stare at Yana, so smug in her confidence.

"I don't know what you saw," you answer, "but I saw a lifetime of pain and the promise of more. I'm done."

Yana gives you a look of contempt before turning and walking away. Pavel looks from Kharzin to Yana, briefly weighing his options, before following after Yana like a puppy dog.

Watching them go, you feel a rage boiling up inside you. Rather than face Kharzin, you turn and stomp away. So much for camaraderie. You hear Kharzin running to catch up to you. When he reaches you, he puts his hand on your shoulder, and you slap it away. "Don't touch me!"

"I'm sorry," Kharzin says, hands up in the air, "but we need to talk about this."

"There's nothing to talk about. I'm leaving. You can go to your precious valley with Pavel and Yana."

"Pavel and Yana will be fine together, but I can't let you walk off into the wilderness alone. Like it or not, you're stuck with me."

You see the determination in Kharzin's eyes and realize you're not going to win this particular fight.

"Fine," you answer. "Let's see how far you're willing to follow."

Move the Guards to Node 38. Proceed to page 5, and read Chapter 1:2.

Chapter 1:2 Mount Pozhar - Kharzin

You've been walking next to Vera, locked in a silent battle of wills for several miles. Finally, you decide to be the bigger person and break the silence.

"So, what's the plan now that we've given up on the Voice and the valley and we've decided to let Tenebris take over the world?"

Vera raises her eyebrows at you. "You believe all that? That Tenebris is real?"

"You saw the same thing I did."

"I don't know what I saw," Vera shrugs. "It could have been battle frenzy. Could have been frost fever - it was really cold in that pass."

"Obviously you don't believe that, but let's say you're right. Let's say we imagined the whole thing. We'll pretend we never heard the Voice and we don't have magic powers now. What's the plan?"

"I'm going to Paran."

At this, you stop in your tracks. "Paran?"

"Yes, Paran," Vera nods.

"But that's halfway around the world! Why do you want to go there?"

"Because I'm tired of...*this*," Vera says, spreading her arms out wide. "I'm tired of Isofar. I'm tired of people telling me what to do. I'm tired of not fitting in. And because…"

"Because?"

"Because, that's where my father is."

"Your father? I thought you were an orphan."

Vera huffs and strides away. "Your parents don't have to be dead to be an orphan."

You take a moment to wonder about Vera's father before realizing that Vera is getting pretty far ahead of you. When you catch up to her, she seems perfectly content to ignore you.

"Why do you want to find your father, anyway?" you ask.

Vera narrows her eyes and answers without ever turning her head.

"Because I want answers. I want to know why he left, and once I know that, I'm going to start my life over. In a new place. Alone."

"Aren't you happy in the Guard?"

Vera sighs. "You wouldn't understand."

"Understand what?"

Vera tilts her head up and stares at the clouds for a while. "The looks," she finally says. "The distrust behind everyone's eyes. The weight of...everything."

You shake your head in confusion. "What are you talking about?"

Vera gives you an exasperated glare. "I'm a half-breed."

You instinctively gasp at the casual slur. "Don't say that!"

"Like I said, you wouldn't understand."

You're at a loss for words. You think about offering her some vague words of encouragement, but the words you form in your head ring hollow. The truth is, you had no idea Vera was carrying this weight. She always seemed so strong, so sure of herself.

"Vera, I'm sorry."

"For what?"

"For letting you feel like you don't belong. For not getting to know you better."

You sneak a glance at Vera and see the corners of her mouth quivering. You quickly drop your gaze and notice her fingers curled into fists. She takes a deep breath and runs a sleeve across her eyes. An instant later, her face is clear of emotion.

"In Paran it'll be different," she whispers.

Vera picks up the pace, her steps quick and determined. She seems slightly annoyed when your longer legs allow you to match her pace easily.

"So, are you going to follow me all the way to Paran then?" she asks.

"If I have to."

"Why? Why don't you just go to your stupid valley and leave me alone?"

"Because I wouldn't feel right about letting you go off on your own."

Vera mutters something you can't quite make out. Rather than make her repeat it, you change the topic.

"Paran is a long way away," you muse. "If we're going to make it, I'd suggest we find a boat."

"Yeah, I know. Why do you think we're headed to Strofa, you big oaf?"

Place a narrative chip on Strofa: The Volkrok (Mini-Map). Begin exploration phase. Upon arrival at Strofa: The Volkrok, proceed to page 6, and read Chapter 1:3.

Chapter 1:3 Strofa: The Volkrok - Vera

It seems a lifetime ago you were last in the Volkrok, but thinking back, it must have been only a few short years. You're hardly surprised that nothing has changed. Same dark bar, same dirty glasses, same stuffed Volkrok hanging from the ceiling, and the same dark haired boy, (or is he a man now?), sitting in the corner.

"Hey Rolan. How're things?" You smile smugly when Rolan nearly chokes on his drink.

"Vera! What are you doing here? And who's your friend there?"

"This? This is Kharzin. He's a Guard."

"Pleased." Kharzin grunts.

"I see. And are you here on official Guard business then?" Rolan asks, his face carefully neutral.

"Not exactly," you answer. "I'm just here for a boat. You wouldn't happen to have any leads on a cheap one with a captain who doesn't ask any questions?" you ask.

"I guess you haven't been around recently," Rolan says, leaning back in his chair.

"I guess not. What's up?"

"There was a raid. Some Falmundians burned some buildings near the shipyard. Cid's not letting any boats out."

"That's ridiculous. Half the trade in Isofar goes through here. If those boats don't get moving, he'll have every merchant and vendor in Isofar calling for his head."

"Well, you'll have to take it up with Cid," says Rolan. "As dockmaster, I think he's used to putting up with a few irate merchants. Comes with the territory."

"Okay, we'll go see Cid then. Thanks for the heads up." You're nearly out the door when Rolan calls out to you.

"Hey, Vera. Why do you need a boat anyway?"

"Have a nice life Rolan," you answer, pushing the door open and stepping out into the sunlight.

Once you cross the street, Kharzin clears his throat. "So, who's your friend?"

"Friend? More of an acquaintance."

Kharzin's eyebrows go up waiting for you to elaborate.

"We used to run in the same circles."

"What circles? I thought you were in an orphanage before you joined the Guard?"

"I was. Until I wasn't. Once they kicked me out, I tried to make a go of it on my own. Came here looking to catch a break."

"And?"

"Caught trouble instead."

"Ah. And Rolan? He was part of that trouble?"

"Look, I don't need to be lectured by you. I paid for my supposed crimes. I'm still paying for them."

"The Guard?"

"Yes, the Guard. Go to jail, or join the Guard. Some choice."

You notice Kharzin fumbling for something to say, and decide to save him the trouble.

"Look, you don't have to fix me, or whatever you're trying to do. I'm fine. Let's just go see Cid and get a boat."

Place a narrative chip on Strofa: Shipyard.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Strofa: Shipyard, proceed to page 8, and read Chapter 1:4.

Chapter 1:4 Strofa: Shipyard - Kharzin

"No boats." The dockmaster's tone doesn't invite any further argument, but that doesn't seem to stop Vera.

"What are you talking about? I see four boats right there!" Vera says, gesturing to the perfectly good boats bouncing in the harbor.

"You heard what I said, Vera. No boats."

She spreads her arms out wide and smiles. "Cid. After all we've been through, I'm going to need a reason."

Cid points a thumb at the charred remains of several warehouses. "Is that a good enough reason?"

"That raid was days ago!" Vera says. "Besides, the boats didn't catch fire. They still float don't they?"

"Those Falmundians are still out there attacking the countryside at will!" Cid yells, his face turning red. "Until they're taken care of, no boats."

"And what if we...take care of them?" you say, speaking up for the first time.

Cid seems somewhat startled by you, as if he just realized that you could speak. He gives you a long look up and down before finding his voice again.

"Well umm... that's what you're paid to do isn't it?"

"It is," you reply.

"No," Vera says. "That's what the city guard is paid to do. Where are they?"

"Patrolling the walls?" Cid guesses.

"More like hiding behind those walls," Vera says.

Cid gives a shrug. "Maybe you get the guard to help you, or maybe you just track down the Falmundians yourself. At this point I don't care, I just want it done."

"When we get back, I want a boat," Vera says, pushing her finger into Cid's chest to make her point. "A big one."

Choose a path:

A. Try to convince the city guard to help you track down the Falmundians.
Place a narrative chip on Strofa: North Gate.

Begin exploration phase.

Proceed to page 9, and read Chapter 1:5.

B. Track the Falmundians on your own.
Place a narrative chip on Node 45.

Begin exploration phase.

Proceed to page 10, and read Chapter 1:6.

Chapter 1:5 Strofa: North Gate - Vera

When you reach Strofa's massive North Gate you're surprised there are no guards on duty. After a raid, you'd expect them to be doubled.

"Come on," you say, pointing to the guardhouse built into the wall. "I bet they're all hiding in there."

You knock on the door and wait a few seconds before standing aside to make way for Kharzin. One kick sends the door flying inward, startling two guards at their dice game and waking a third from his nap in the corner.

"H-Hey. You're not allowed to be in here!" one of the guards stammers.

"You seem to be really bad at keeping people out of places they're not supposed to be," you quip. "Where are all the other guards?"

"Some of them deserted following the raid, and a bunch more when the captain wanted us to go after the Falmundians."

"They quit when the city needed them the most?" Kharzin asks, incredulously.

You glance over at Kharzin. The irony of lecturing guards on desertion when he is technically in the middle of deserting is apparently lost on Kharzin.

"We were hired to break up bar fights," one of the dice players says, "not fight against an army! We're not soldiers."

"You are now," you say. "Go tell your captain to gather whatever guards they can. We're gonna save this rat-infested city."

Move the Guards to Node 45. Proceed to page 12, and read Chapter 1:7.

Chapter 1:6 Ash Grove - Vera

CRACK!

"Unbelievable," you whisper to Kharzin. "You want to step on a few more branches? I think you missed a few back there."

"I'm not built for stealth," Kharzin answers, a little too loudly.

"Hey! Keep your voice down! It's like you've never done this before."

"I *haven't* ever done this before."

"We literally just ambushed a group of Falmundians! Remember? Dead soldiers? glowing stones? Pushy Voice? End of the world?"

"Yeah, okay. But we just just had to wait around, not walk through a maze of twigs with my clayhorn feet."

"Shh!" you wave your arms for Kharzin to crouch down. "I think I hear something."

Through the trees ahead, you can just make out the indistinct hum of a man's voice. Creeping closer, you can make out a few words.

"…… met up… the 4th…. are they?"

"Drop your weapons," a menacing voice snarls from behind you.

You feel a sharp pain digging into your back. Risking a glance back, you see a Falmundian soldier holding a spear with practiced ease. Another soldier forces Kharzin to drop his spear.

"Both of you, stand up slowly and walk to the clearing," the soldier at your back orders. "No sudden movements."

"I'm afraid your friends won't be showing up," you tell him.

"What are you talking about?"

"The 4th, was it? We took care of them in a mountain pass just north of here."

"I'm sure our captain will love to hear the tale," the man growls as he pushes you forward with his spear.

In the clearing is a small makeshift camp. You count four more soldiers, each one wearing the calm and determined gaze of a professional. Huddled near the center of the camp are what appear to be a ragtag band of brigands. The camp is small and efficient; food and equipment neatly packed and set aside, ready to be moved at a moment's notice. All signs point to this being an elite group of fighters using the local riffraff to carry out operations in the area. The only odd detail is the cart containing barrels of oil near the perimeter of the camp, but then you remember the fires in Strofa.

"Surely you're not from the city guard?" the captain asks, looking from you to Kharzin. "No doubt they're still cowering behind their useless walls. Who are you, and why are you here?"

"We're from the Isofarian Guard," you answer, "and we're here to clear the land of vermin."

"And how were you planning on doing that with just the two of you?"

"I figure two is enough," you shrug.

The Falmundian chuckles. "You two, empty handed against the whole world? Brave, but stupid."

"Who said our hands were empty?" Kharzin asks. He extends his hand palm up. Where there was nothing, there now exists a brilliant spear made of pure light. Before anyone can react, Kharzin flings the spear across the camp into the barrels of oil. You instinctively close your eyes, and red light blossoms through your eyelids. A moment later, you are knocked to the ground by a concussive blast that rattles your ribcage. When you open your eyes everything is on fire. The soldiers closest to the wagon are gone. You scramble away from the flames and miraculously find your bow at the feet of a dead Falmundian. With weapon in hand, you search for Kharzin and find him standing against the three remaining soldiers.

Proceed to page 11, and continue reading Chapter 1:6.

Chapter 1:6 Ash Grove - Vera (cont.)

Battle Event

Place a '1 Star - Falmund Scout' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I of the battlefield. Place a '1 Star - Stone Hunter' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot II of the battlefield. Place a '1 Star - Brigand Archer' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot III of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Restore Guards HP back to 20 and begin Battle Phase again.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 1:6 - Victory* below.

Chapter 1:6 - Victory

The last Falmundian falls clutching the arrow lodged in his chest. You allow yourself a small respite before moving to help Kharzin smother the flames surrounding the oil cart. Once the flames are out, you survey your surroundings. The camp is completely obliterated.

"How'd you know the explosion wouldn't hit us?" you ask Kharzin. When Kharzin doesn't answer, you look over and realize he's blushing. "You didn't?! We could have died!"

"They were going to kill us anyway, and now we're alive," he says, defensively.

You bite off your scathing reply and take a moment to think about it. "I guess you're right. Thanks for *almost* blowing us up."

"Don't mention it," Kharzin mumbles. He stoops to grab a Falmundian bow and sword off the ground. The sword, he attaches to his belt. The bow, he hands to you. "Come on, let's get back to Strofa."

Obtain: Falmundian Bow (Weapon - Vera)
Place a narrative chip on Strofa: The Docks.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Strofa: The Docks, proceed to page 14, and read Chapter 1:8.

Chapter 1:7 Ash Grove - Vera

You and Kharzin stride through the forest with a dozen of Strofa's finest bumbling behind. Looking back at them, 'finest' might be a stretch.

"Can't you keep them quiet?" you ask Captain Karl, leader of the city guard.

"They're just nervous," they've never been on a mission like this.

"And have you?" Kharzin asks.

"You could say that. I did a stint in the Guard before retiring and taking the job in Strofa."

"Then you know we'll never find any Falmundians if your men keep chattering like a bunch of acolytes on their first day of school," you say.

While Captain Karl drops back to try and quiet his guards, you have a quick word with Kharzin. "If we meet any real soldiers, these guards aren't going to be much good except as a distraction. We're going to have to do all the heavy lifting."

"Agreed. Hopefully our numbers will swing the fight in our favor."

After several hours of marching through the woods, you are nearly at the point of giving up. Captain Karl has managed to quiet his troops down to the level of a distant thunderstorm, but the element of surprise was never a real possibility. Just as you're about to call off the search, you find your first trace of the Falmundians: a footprint in a patch of soft mud. You squat to have a closer look and hear a THUNK in the tree behind you. You turn and find an arrow buried in the trunk.

"Ambush!" Kharzin yells. "Guards on me!"

You nock an arrow and move to the right flank as Kharzin charges through the trees with twelve confused guards desperately trying to keep up. Over a small rise you find four Falmundian soldiers in a defensive position behind what appears to be a group of common brigands. Kharzin crashes into the brigands and dispatches them before Captain Karl and his guards even join the fight. From your position, you can see the Falmundians preparing to fire a volley of arrows into Captain Karl's guards.

You quickly draw and loose your arrow into the closest Falmundian. He falls, grasping at the arrow in his heart, while his companions search wildly for the new threat. One of them spots you and releases a hasty shot in your direction, missing wide. By the time you nock another arrow, Captain Karl has overwhelmed the remaining Falmundians with the city guard.

"Too easy," you breathe to yourself. You catch motion out of the corner of your eye and instinctively tuck into a roll as a dagger sails over your head. When you return to your feet a flurry of sword strikes forces you back as you desperately ward off the blows with your bow. Thankfully, Kharzin joins the fight allowing you a chance to regain your footing.

Battle Event

Place a '2 Star - Stone Hunter' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Restore Guards HP back to 20 and begin Battle Phase again.

If victorious: Proceed to page 13 and read *Chapter 1:7 - Victory*.

Chapter 1:7 - Victory

After the fight, Captain Karl orders his guards to search the dead Falmundians. Once he's satisfied they're up to the task, he follows you and Kharzin as you explore the surrounding area. In a nearby clearing, you find a small camp, tidy and well provisioned. Near the edge of the camp you spot a small wagon filled with jars of oil.

"Kharzin, what do you make of this?" you ask, holding up one of the jars.

"Looks like oil."

"Yes, I know. What do you suppose they were going to do with it?"

"Burn down Strofa," Captain Karl answers. "Looks like you saved us a lot of future headaches."

"They could have done a lot of damage with this much oil," notes Kharzin. "You'll want to tell the mayor that they were recruiting the local troublemakers to help them. I'd suggest returning with more guards and sweeping the forest."

"It took everything I had to get *this* group together. I'll never convince the mayor to pull more guards from the city to chase ghosts. Besides, it seems to me that this is more your jurisdiction. Can't you get more Guards to help here?"

"No," you cut in. "We're already on a mission, and the sooner we can get back to it, the better. Without the Falmundians around to direct them, the bandits will abandon whatever grand plans they had and go back to regular banditry."

"Your words are hardly inspiring," Captain Karl says.

"Oh, I wasn't going for inspiration, just a dose of reality. There will always be bandits, and there will always be men like you trying to stop them. We, however, have more important things to do."

"Be that as it may, I do appreciate what you've done for us, and I can't let you leave empty handed. I think some of the supplies from this camp should help you get to where you're going."

Obtain: 20 Sil, 1x Tent (Item)
Place a narrative chip on Strofa: The Docks (Mini-Map).

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Strofa: The Docks, proceed to page 15, and read Chapter 1:9.

Chapter 1:8 Strofa: The Docks - Kharzin

"You're back!" Cid yells, as he extracts himself from a group of angry looking merchants and makes his way towards you and Vera. "I suppose this means the Falmundians are dead, and I can get this mob out of my hair!" He gives a sweeping gesture toward the crowd currently staring daggers into his back.

"The Falmundians are dead," you say, dropping the Falmundian sword you found at Cid's feet. "The mob is up to you."

"You call this proof?" Cid asks. "You could have gotten this sword anywhere! I can name three merchants on this pier who are selling Falmundian weapons, albeit illegally."

"Listen Cid," Vera says, in a deadly soft voice. "I know you don't trust me, but my friend Kharzin here takes exception to you calling him a liar. If you need more proof there's a burned out camp north of here with a pile of dead bodies in it. I didn't feel like traipsing through the woods with a bunch of severed heads. If this sword isn't proof enough for you we're going to have a real problem."

You watch as the color drains from Cid's face. You almost feel bad for him.

"Okay, Vera," Cid says, holding up his hands. "Your word is good enough for me."

"Glad to hear it," Vera replies, coolly.

"While you were away, I found a captain willing to take you anywhere you want to go." Cid points to a plain looking river boat moored to a pier further down the dock. "He seems like an odd fellow, but for you I won't even check his papers."

"You're a gem." Vera tells Cid before turning to you. "Come on Kharzin, looks like we're finally getting out of this dump."

As you approach the boat a leather-faced man with long dark hair steps off to greet you.

"Kharzin, Vera," he greets you by name. "Welcome to *Destiny*. Please watch your step while boarding."

"Looks like Cid already told you our names," Vera says. "I'm afraid you have us at a disadvantage, Captain…?"

"Just Dunamis," the man answers. "If you'll come aboard! I'm afraid we haven't much time to dawdle."

"And where are you headed, Dunamis?" you ask.

"South."

"Anywhere more specific?" you press.

"South is fine," Vera says. "We can discuss specifics later."

You follow Dunamis across the gangplank and onto the boat. Once aboard, you turn to help Vera cross the gangplank, but she brushes past your outstretched hand and makes her way to the opposite end of the boat.

"Thanks for having us aboard, Dunamis," you say. "I'm sure Vera appreciates it too, it's just been a long day."

"I understand. There's a small space belowdecks where you can store anything you need and maybe catch a little shuteye."

Place a narrative chip on Node 66.

Move the Guards to Node 66. (Use Boat Chip on water nodes) Proceed to page 17, and read Chapter 1:10.

Chapter 1:9 Strofa: The Docks - Kharzin

"You're back!" Cid yells, as he extracts himself from a group of angry looking merchants and makes his way towards you and Vera. "I suppose this means the Falmundians are dead, and I can get this mob out of my hair?" He gives a sweeping gesture toward the crowd currently staring daggers into his back.

"The Falmundians are dead," you say, "The mob is up to you."

"I'm going to need some proof. I can't just take your word for it."

"Listen Cid," Vera says, in a deadly soft voice. "I know you don't trust me, but my friend Kharzin here takes exception to you calling him a liar. However, if you absolutely just have to have proof, just ask Captain Karl what you'll find in the woods North of here. Hint: it's a camp full of dead Falmundians. Now, here's my dilemma: Every second I spend in this festering rathole of a city makes my skin crawl. If you make me wait while you check the veracity of my story with Captain Karl instead of just believing me, we're going to have a real problem."

You watch as the color drains from Cid's face. You almost feel bad for him.

"Okay, Vera," Cid says, holding up his hands. "Your word is good enough for me."

"Glad to hear it," Vera replies, coolly.

"While you were away, I found a captain willing to take you anywhere you want to go." Cid points to a plain looking river boat moored to a pier further down the dock. "He seems like an odd fellow, but for you I won't even check his papers."

"You're a gem," Vera tells Cid before turning to you.

"Come on Kharzin, looks like we're finally getting out of this dump."

As you approach the boat a leather-faced man with long dark hair steps off to greet you.

"Kharzin, Vera," he greets you by name. "Welcome to *Destiny*. Please watch your step while boarding."

"Looks like Cid already told you our names," Vera says. "I'm afraid you have us at a disadvantage, Captain…?"

"Just Dunamis," the man answers. "If you'll come aboard? I'm afraid we haven't much time to dawdle."

"And where are you headed, Dunamis?" you ask.

"South."

"Anywhere more specific?" you press.

"South is fine," Vera says. "We can discuss specifics later."

You follow Dunamis across the gangplank and onto the boat. Once aboard, you turn to help Vera cross the gangplank, but she brushes past your outstretched hand and makes her way to the opposite end of the boat.

"Thanks for having us aboard, Dunamis," you say. "I'm sure Vera appreciates it too, it's just been a long day."

"I understand. There's a small space belowdecks where you can store anything you need and maybe catch a little shuteye."

Place a narrative chip on Node 66.

Move the Guards to Node 66. (Use Boat Chip on water nodes) Proceed to page 17, and read Chapter 1:10.

Chapter 1:10 Dunamis' Boat - Vera

You allow your mind to wander as the shifting landscape flows by you in a blur. In between daydreams of what life in Paran will be like and the likelihood of ever finding your father, you, watch as the gently rolling hills and forests are slowly replaced by wide open spaces and farmland.

Your reverie is interrupted as Dunamis makes his way past you to adjust the sail.

So Dunamis," you call out. "How long have you been piloting a riverboat?"

"Not long," he replies, securing the line and coming to stand by you near the rail. "In fact, this is my first voyage."

At this, your eyebrows raise. "I only ask because you seem to be light on cargo - other than us I mean. I don't know what Cid paid you, but it couldn't have been enough to make the trip worth it for you."

"I'd do just fine" Dunamis chuckles. "I'm exactly where I need to be."

"What do you mean?" you ask, but before Dunamis can answer, you are distracted by a commotion along the shore. Two groups of farmers appear to be yelling at each other. Scattered among the farmers are a few individuals dressed in ragged armor and carrying weapons of dubious quality.

"What's going on over there?" Kharzin calls from the back of the boat, where he'd been having a nap.

"Looks to be another squabble between the local farming guilds." Dunamis answers. "They've been rivals for a long time, but their rivalry has taken a more dangerous turn recently."

You watch as a woman lobs a potato through the air striking one of the armored soldiers in the helmet. Oddly enough, this causes a wave of laughter among the farmers and you are relieved to see tensions relax slightly. You, round a bend in the river, and the farmers disappear from view. With the distraction gone, and Kharzin still in the back of the boat, you find yourself alone with Dunamis for the first time.

"So," you begin, more to break the awkward silence than anything. "Maybe it's time we discuss our destination?"

"What would you like to discuss?" Dunamis answers.

You're not sure how much you can trust Dunamis. Something about him feels...different, and you don't want to reveal your plan to escape to Paran until you have a better understanding of him. You decide to keep it vague. "For starters, do you have any place you need to be?"

"I told you, I'm right where I need to be."

"Yes, well, I don't really know what that means."

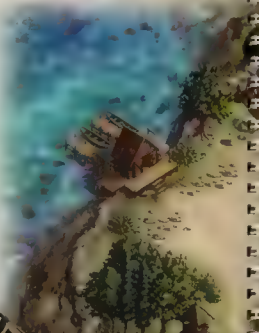
"It means I'm content to float down this river for as long as you'd like, or I can put you ashore right here."

"There's no need for that," you reply testily. "South is fine for now. I'll let you know if it changes."

"As you wish. Until then, enjoy the weather."

Place a narrative chip on Fort Istra: Boat Dock (Mini-Map).

Move the Guards to Fort Istra: Boat Dock. (Use Guards' miniature or chips) Proceed to page 18, and read Chapter 1:11.



Chapter 1:11 Fort Istra Boat Dock - Kharzin

In your dream, you are walking an unfamiliar mountain path. Overhead, puffy white clouds float through the brilliant blue sky while a cool breeze blows across your skin. You close your eyes and inhale the fresh scent of wildflowers. When you open your eyes, everything is changed. The sky is dark and the wind is picking up speed. You look around and spot a cave where you can take shelter. You reach the mouth of the cave just as the first drops of rain begin to fall. The moment you step inside, your skin begins to crawl. Something is very wrong in the cave. You try to turn around, but you can no longer control your body. You struggle in vain as your own feet betray you, marching you further into the cave. Suddenly, the floor of the cave sprouts teeth and the walls begin closing in on you. Panic takes over as you realize you are in the maw of a giant beast. You awake in a pool of sweat, and realize the boat has stopped moving. Has it run aground?

Leaving your suddenly claustrophobic room, you emerge from belowdecks and find the boat moored to a strange dock on a forested shore. Somewhere in the distance, you can hear a waterfall.

"Where are we?" Vera asks, appearing on the deck behind you. "And where's Dunamis?"

"I don't know," you say, gripping your spear, "and I don't like this. Stay close." You lead Vera off the boat and onto the shore. Through the trees, you can make out the crumbled ruins of an old fortress.

"I think our friend Dunamis has led us to a smuggler's hideout," Vera says.

Suddenly, Dunamis appears before you. "Welcome to Fort Istra!" he says, as if he hadn't suddenly appeared out of thin air.

"Where are we?" you demand.

"I believe I just told you, Fort Istra," replies Dunamis. "Come, you must be hungry." And with that, he disappears.

Place a narrative chip on Fort Istra: Barracks.

Move the Guards to Fort Istra: Barracks. Proceed to Chapter 1:12.

Chapter 1:12 Fort Istra: Barracks: Vera

Dunamis, the giant armored entity, sits across from you and Kharzin while you both stuff your faces with an assortment of delectable meats, steaming vegetables, and flaky buttered bread. When the shock of discovering an invisible timeless world guarded by a shapeshifting giant wore off, you discovered that you were, in fact, hungry.

"You want to go to Paran."

Dunamis' statement catches you mid chew causing you to choke on a mouthful of ham. Kharzin immediately begins hammering on your back with his big meaty fists.

"How did you know that?" you manage to say between coughs.

"Allow me to present an alternative," continues Dunamis. "You both stay here as long as you want. You've been through a lot, and you need a chance to think through everything. If you come to realize that you belong here with the Stonebound, I have a mission for you."

"A mission?" Kharzin asks.

"Yes, your part in turning back Tenebris."

"And are you going to share this mission with us?" you ask, after it becomes clear that Dunamis is done talking.

"When you're ready, yes."

"We're ready," you say, pushing your plate of food away and crossing your arms.

"Very well," Dunamis begins. "Your mission is to travel to Koros and convince the merchant kings to send an army to aid Isofar."

A long pause ensues while you wait for Dunamis to clue you in on the joke so you can all have a big laugh. Instead, he just stares at you in stony silence, and you realize he's being serious.

"How would we even begin to do that?" Kharzin asks. "We're just two Guards. We won't make it within a hundred yards of a king."

Proceed to page 19, and continue reading Chapter 1:12.

Chapter 1:12 Fort Istra: Barracks - Vera (Continued)

You cut in. "Bigger question is *why* would we do that? Asking a foreign army to invade Isofar is insane!"

"I didn't say invade," Dunamis replies. "I said aid."

"Aid us in what?" you ask. "Isofar is doing just fine."

"You may think that now, but Tenebris is already moving. The day is swiftly approaching when Isofar will need to gather all the defenders it can."

If you want us to go to Koros, why did you bring us all the way down here?" Kharzin asks.

"Because I needed you to see this place. You have to understand what's at stake here. You have seen the visions of Tenebris, and you have experienced a little of what it means to be Stonebound. You can continue running, or you can fulfill your duty. The choice is yours."

"Sounds good Dunamis, I'll have to get back to you on that," you say, standing up to leave

"I can see you aren't ready to believe me yet. Please, take as long as you need to think things through."

As you make your way out of the mess hall, you're surprised to see Kharzin following you

Wouldn't you rather stay with Dunamis?" you ask. "There's your purpose! I release you from my service! Shoo

"I do have a lot of questions, but honestly I'm too tired to think right now. Luckily, we have an infinite amount of time to figure everything out, or so Dunamis says."

"Maybe you do. I'm leaving now."

"Now? Why?" Kharzin asks.

"Because I didn't ask for any of this, and frankly, I don't care. The world has always been broken, and Dunamis is a fool to think that I could do anything to fix it. I'm going to Razdor, and, then I'm going to find a way to get to Paran."

Kharzin follows you silently as you make your way to the invisible barrier that separates Fort Istra from the rest of Isofar. He's so quiet you have to keep checking to see if he's still there. When you reach the shimmering border, you turn back to face Kharzin. "Okay, I guess this is it. Thanks for sticking with me this far."

You watch as realization dawns on Kharzin's face. "Vera, you're mistaken. I'm going with you."

END OF CHAPTER 1

Exploration Phase now uses Enemy Index Chapter 2. See page 5 in the Enemy Index Book.

Fort Istra is now active!

All progression of rebuilding the fort is available from previous Campaigns, and buildings can now be used. A new 'Fort Istra Stash' can now be started for this Campaign. Contents from previous Campaign Stashes cannot be accessed for this Campaign. Reference the Fort Istra & Save Index Book.

Reference page 4 in the Fort Istra & Save Index Book to send out **The First Commission!**

Caravan Quests are now active!

A mysterious caravan is now traveling through Isofar. Place the Caravan Chip on Node 61. Caravan Quest 1 is now available. See page 140 in the Quests book.

Side Quests are now active!

Additional Side Quests are now available for Chapter 2. See page 57 in the Quests Book.

Prestige is now active!

Read pages 3-4 in the City Index Book.

Kharzin and Vera heal HP to 20, and all negative chips in their bags are removed and placed back in the supply.

Kharzin and Vera obtain some materials from the fort before beginning their journey!

Obtain:
1x Reinforced Bone Sword (Weapon)
2x Purifying Seed (Item)

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: The Lookout Inn (Mini Map).

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: The Lookout Inn, proceed to page 21, and read Chapter 2:1.

Chapter 2:1 Razdor: The Lookout Inn - Vera

On your way into town, you stop at The Lookout, a local inn. You have time for a meal and a few hours of sleep before you attempt to cross the border into Falmund. Once in Falmund, you'll have to figure out how to cross through the hostile country, but that's a problem for another day.

Kharzin has scarcely spoken a word since leaving Fort Istra. He's clearly upset, but he acts as though nothing is wrong. It's maddening. You would prefer that he scream at you, call you a traitor or a coward, rather than judge you in silence.

"You should eat," your companion says. It's the most he's said to you in the past six hours.

You stare down at your bowl. Boar meat, tomatoes, and red onion in a thick, brown broth. On any other occasion, a perfectly acceptable meal, but at the moment your stomach has somehow twisted itself into knots.

"The only way to Falmund is through Murus Fort," you explain. "It will be crawling with guards. Too many to fight and too many to sneak past undetected." You wait for Kharzin to tell you that your plan was terrible to begin with, that only a fool would attempt it. Instead, he lifts his bowl and noisily slurps down the remainder of his soup. As he does so, a man approaches your table. You can tell by his exaggerated smile that he is going to try to sell you something. As if on cue, a silk cloth is unfurled from his pocket. Upon it, he lays an assortment of necklaces and rings.

"All genuine gold and silver," he assures you. "The finest in Razdor." Then he drops his voice to a whisper, "If you're truly looking for passage to Falmund, I know a man who can help you. Head to the slums. Look for a door painted green." With that, he backs away, pretending to be offended. "There is no reason to be rude," he announces, loudly enough that anyone might hear. "If you're not interested, you could have simply said so."

When he's gone, Kharzin shakes his head.

"You think it's a trap?" you ask him.

"I do," he admits. "I assume he plans to murder us, or at least rob us blind. We're going there anyway, aren't we?"

"So far it's the only lead we have," you say.

Kharzin rises to his feet, grabbing a hunk of bread and stuffing it into his pocket. "Let's get this over with then."

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Slums.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Slums, proceed to page 22, and read Chapter 2:2.

Chapter 2:2 Razdor: Slums - Kharzin

You spend hours searching for a door painted green. Vera is unwilling to accept that it might simply not exist, that a stranger had played a trick on her for his own amusement. When you were her age, you were just as headstrong. If anyone offered you friendly advice, more than likely you'd be tempted to do the opposite. Because of that, you know that any "words of wisdom" from you at this particular moment would likely fall on deaf ears.

Pushed to the point of exhaustion, Vera slams her fist into a wall.

"Go ahead," she snarls. "Say it."

"What would you have me say?" you ask.

"That this is madness," she explains. "That we're slinking around here like rats when we should be heading to Koros. That I'll never make it to Falmund, much less Paran, and, even if I did, there is no reason to think that my father is even still alive or that he would ever want to see me."

Before you have the opportunity to answer, a voice interrupts from the shadows. "Don't tell me you've been having second thoughts?"

Instinctively, Vera reaches for the hilt of her sword, but the stranger steps forward, revealing himself to be unarmed.

"I'm not your enemy," he assures you. "In fact, if I'm not mistaken, I'm precisely the man you're looking for." He smiles and points to the plain wooden door behind him. If it was ever green, the paint has long since chipped away.

People find me when I want to be found," he explains. "If a stranger wanders through the slums in search of a door that doesn't exist, it's not long before they attract my attention. Especially when they've spent the better part of a day stumbling around Razdor like a couple of drunk Gayhorns."

The last comment appears to wound Vera's pride, but she bites her tongue.

"If it makes you feel better," the man adds, "you can call me 'Green.' It's as good a name as any. Now, down to business. It's not every day a man in my profession meets with two former members of the Isofarian Guard." When he sees your astonished faces, Green laughs. "Yes, I know who you are and why you've come," he explains. "You are among the few soldiers still loyal to Captain Grigory after his exile."

"Exile?" you demand.

Green raises an eyebrow. "Yes," he says. "I'm surprised you hadn't heard."

"Can you take me to Falmund or not?" Vera demands. The man shakes his head. "No," he admits, "but I can introduce you to someone who can. I would ask only that you do something for us in return. There are some items we need from Fort Razdor. A cart full of weapons."

Vera interrupts him. "We're not criminals."

Neither are we," Green insists. "Just a group of concerned citizens. Men and women who don't like the way things have been going in Isofar. Our weapons were confiscated. Swords, bows, spears… everything we'd need to defend ourselves when the time comes."

"If you are intent on rebellion," you tell him, "perhaps there was some wisdom in the decision to disarm you."

The man laughs. "Ah yes," he says, "Say me. Your noble friends in the Isofarian Guard only have the best interests of the community at heart. Go join them, if that's what you truly believe. Or, if you're willing to open your eyes and see what's really going on, maybe you'll help us. Not for me, but for the people of Razdor." With that, Green disappears into the shadows.

He could be lying," you say.

"And he could be telling the truth," Vera answers. "There's only one way to find out."

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Fort Razdor.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Fort Razdor, proceed to page 24, and read Chapter 2:3.

Chapter 2:3 Razdor: Fort Razdor - Vera

Kharzin clearly disapproves of your decision to help Green, but he follows you to the fort anyway. Perhaps he is helping just so he can say "I told you so" when things turn out badly. The Guard at the gate is tall and baby faced, no doubt a fresh recruit.

"State your business," he demands gruffly.

"We're from the North," Kharzin explains. "Stationed out of Silny."

"I didn't ask where you were stationed," the Guard seethes. "Tell *me why* you are here."

Before Kharzin has a chance to answer, you interrupt him. "We were expecting a shipment weeks ago," you explain. "Either point us in the direction of your supply sergeant or get out of our way."

The man considers this for a moment, seemingly uncertain how to respond. Then he nods his head quietly and waves you through, directing you to an armory at the other end of the fort.

As you make your way through the courtyard, you are shocked by the seeming lack of decorum among the Guards stationed here. A handful of soldiers share a bottle of wine even though they are clearly on duty. Elsewhere, a game of cards abruptly ends in a fistfight. A young man in front of you carries a stack of weapons in his arms like a bundle of firewood.

"What have you brought us then, Dima?" the Guard stationed in front of the armory asks.

"A fairly good haul, sergeant Garret. Better than the last time."

Garret's eyes narrow. "I should hope so, for your sake." Then, he turns to you. "And you two, you better not be coming back empty handed."

"We're not stationed here. We're from the North," Kharzin explains. "We're here to—"

Before Kharzin can finish, Garret cuts him off. "I don't care where you're from. If you are not on duty here, you have no business in my fort. Dima, get them out of here."

As Dima is escorting you back through the gate, you notice two zealots from the Circle of Seers leaving with a cart. They've covered whatever supplies they are hauling with a green tarp. All of this strikes you as rather suspicious.

Choose a path:

A. Follow the zealots.
Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Market.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Market, proceed to page 25, and read Chapter 2:4.

B. Report back to Green.
Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Slums.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Slums, proceed to page 26, and read Chapter 2:5.

Chapter 2:4 Razdor: Market - Kharzin

You follow the zealots until they reach a crowded market. A vendor with a shiny bald head and a bright orange tunic places his hand on your chest, stopping you dead in your tracks.

"Excuse me, but you look like a man of discernment—"

"Not now," you interrupt him sternly, but by the time you gently push him aside, you've lost sight of the zealots.

As you wander through the stalls in hopes of again picking up their trail, you are forced to politely, but firmly, turn down offers from merchants to sample their wares. Against your wishes, a cloud of sugary sweet perfume is sprayed into your face and a scrap of smooth silk thrust into your hands.

"No thank you," you say, again and again, until the words grow tired on your lips and seem almost to lose their meaning.

Finally, you discover the zealots' cart abandoned in a dark alley. It feels good to slip away from the crowd, but as you approach, the two zealots emerge from the shadows, one from each end of the alley. It seems that you have wandered into a trap.

Battle Event - AMBUSH

Place a '2 Star - Seer Zealot' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 2:4 - Victory*

Chapter 2:4 - Victory

The zealots scatter, leaving their cart behind. You lift the tarp, revealing a large assortment of weapons.

Vera laughs. "Well, Green will be happy to get his toys back."

"And then it's off to Falmund?" you ask.

Vera quickly changes the subject. "I'm not sure if I trust Green," she admits, "but something strange is happening in Isofar if the Guard is sending weapons to the Circle of Seers. Perhaps there is more going on here than meets the eye."

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Slums.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Slums, proceed to page 27, and read Chapter 2:6.

Chapter 2:5 Razdor: Slums - Kharzin

You wait by the door where you first met Green until he finally shows up.

"Did you do as I asked?" he demands.

"We found where the Guard is storing weapons," you explain, "but we were kicked out before we had a chance to recover them. We did notice something strange: two zealots leaving the fort with a cartful of supplies."

Green's eyes light up with curiosity. "Weapons?" he wonders.

"We're not certain," Vera admits. "Either way, it doesn't make much sense. Why would the Guard be supplying the Circle with weapons?"

"An excellent question," Green admits, "and one that you're going to help us answer. The Seer's Tower is in the Waterfall District. You'll never make it into the tower itself, but members of the Circle tend to frequent the taverns and shops in the surrounding area. Spend some time there. See what you can dig up."

Vera narrows her eyes. "How many of these little jobs do you expect us to do before you introduce us to your contact?" she demands.

"One last favor," Green promises, "then I'll do as you ask." With that, he slips back into the shadows.

You glance over at Vera hopefully. Maybe she has grown so tired of being strung along that she's changed her mind about crossing the border.

Vera sighs. "Well, I guess we really don't have a choice," she says. "Let's head to the Waterfall District and see what we can turn up."

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Waterfall District.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Waterfall District, proceed to page 28, and read Chapter 2:7.

Chapter 2:6 Razdor: Slums - Vera

It's hard not to draw attention to yourselves as you roll the weapons cart down the street, and Green soon tracks you, down. He lifts the tarp and exam.nes the weapons.

"Impressive," he admits.

"Thanks," you say. "We had to fight off an ambush to get this.

Green laughs charitably. "I was talking about the weapons not your abilities, though I don't doubt you're formidable in battle."

"There's something strange happening at the fort," Kharzin says. "The Guards let the zealots take these weapons. Which doesn't make any sense. Why would the Guard and the Circle be working together?"

Green's eyes light up. "An excellent question," he admits, "and one that you're going to help us answer. The Seer's Tower is in the Waterfall District. You'll never make it into the tower itself, but members of the Circle have been known to frequent the taverns and shops in the surrounding area. Spend some time there. See what you can dig up."

"No, no, no, no," you say, shaking her head. "We bring you the weapons, you smuggle me into Falmund. That was the deal. No one said anything about another assignment."

"One last favor," Green insists, "and then I'll take you to the man who can help you. If you feel that's unreasonable, you are more than welcome to take your business elsewhere."

You grit your teeth, but manage to prevent yourself from hurling a string of expletives at the smug little man in front of you.

Green laughs. "Oh, and one more thing," he says. "This particular mission might call for a bit more... subtlety than you're accustomed to. For example, try not to drag a cart filled with weapons through the streets where anyone might see you."

"No promises," you say.

"I'd be careful," Green warns. "Whatever the Circle is hiding, they won't hesitate to kill you to keep it a secret."

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Waterfall District.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor- Waterfall District, proceed to page 28, and read Chapter 2:7.

Chapter 2:7 Razdor: Waterfall District - Vera

You spend a few hours in the Waterfall District before noticing something strange: a traveler from Koros standing in front of a tavern. Though rare, it is not unheard of to encounter merchants from Koros in Razdor. However, when he is joined by a Circle of Seers acolyte and they enter the tavern together, your suspicions are aroused.

You follow them inside the crowded tavern, watching them settle into a booth in the back. You grab the closest table, but you are still too far away to overhear their conversation.

"I don't suppose you can read lips?" you wonder. When Kharzin shakes his head, you sigh.

Under the table, you remove your speaking stone, caressing it softly in your hands as you consider what to do next. To your surprise, you find your senses suddenly enhanced. All sounds other than their voices gradually melt away until you are able to hear the details of their conversation with perfect clarity.

"You poisoned the wrong target," the acolyte accuses.

"It makes no difference," the Koros agent insists. "The desired outcome can still be achieved. The two Guilds distrust each other now more than ever. Their rivalry will soon tear Mir apart."

"Unfortunately for you, my master is not willing to leave that to chance. Pay a visit to the cooper in town. Ask if he has received a shipment of spoiled wine. This time, we expect you to personally oversee delivery of the package."

"Thank you," the Koros agent grumbles, "for giving me a second chance."

"There will not be a third," the acolyte warns him. "Do we understand each other?"

The Koros agent nods. "There's no need for threats," he insists.

A few minutes after the acolyte leaves the tavern, the Koros agent makes his exit, and you follow him out the door.

"His hands are trembling," Kharzin whispers. "I wonder what the acolyte said to get him so riled up."

"He basically threatened to kill him," you explain, "if he fails to assassinate his target."

Kharzin looks at you with his mouth open. "You could hear all that?" he marvels.

"Yes, now hush. Our guy is on the move."

The Koros agent makes a sharp turn into a darkened alley. You follow him, but you don't make it far before a figure steps out of the shadows, cutting off your pursuit. You turn back and find two zealots blocking the exit.

Battle Event - AMBUSH

Place a '2 Star - Seer's Zealot' and A1 deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield. Place a '2 Star - Seer's Assassin' and A1 deck on an enemy dashboard in slot III of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 2:7 - Victory* below.

Chapter 2:7 - Victory

By the time your fight is over, the Koros agent is long gone. Furthermore, the fight attracted the attention of several local residents, and a woman cried out for the Guard. You may have killed the assassins in self-defense, but that would be difficult to prove. You decide to beat a hasty retreat before anyone can show up to arrest you.

Stonebound have returned from their Commerce Run. Record gathered materials in the Fort Istra Stash and remove all cubes from the map. Reference page 5 in the Fort Istra & Save Index Book to send out **Commission Two!**

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Slums.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Slums, proceed to page 29, and read Chapter 2:8.

Chapter 2:8 Razdor: Slums - Vera

You find the door where you first met Green. To your surprise, he is already waiting for you there. He listens intently as you describe the conversation you overheard between the acolyte and the Koros agent.

"You've upheld your end of the bargain," he admits. "I think it's time I made some introductions."

In the back of your mind, you had clung to the belief that the door behind Green was somehow significant, perhaps acting as the secret headquarters of Razdor's underground resistance. Instead of taking you through it, however, Green leads you into a crowded tavern across the street. The bartender unlocks a door behind him, allowing you to pass through and down a long set of stairs into the basement.

You find yourself in an old storage room renovated to serve as the headquarters for the local resistance. There are over a dozen people here. Some pour over maps of the city. Others practice sparring, using weapons from an impressive arsenal.

A dark haired man stands when you enter, introducing himself as Fennec. "Green speaks highly of you," he explains. "I know you've been a great help to us. To be honest, we've been hoping that if you saw how dire things had become in Razdor, you would decide to join us on a more permanent basis."

You find yourself growing impatient. "Not interested," you tell him. "But thanks anyway. The only reason we're here is because Green promised you could smuggle us across the border."

Fennec smiles. "It was worth a try. "Tell me what you learned in the Waterfal, District."

When you tell him about the conversation you overheard between the acolyte and the Koros agent, he nods thoughtfully.

"The guilds have been at each other's throats for years," he explains. "But Dimitri, the leader of the Golden Scythe, is the worst of the bunch. He's been trying to seize control of the grain market by bullying his competitors. Theft, murder, sabotage... And now his war has reached all the way here."

"Why hasn't he been arrested?" Kharzin asks.

Fennec laughs. "No one can touch him," he explains.

"Dmitri has his own personal army. And he's backed by the Circle of Seers. Once Dimitri takes over Mir's food supply, the Circle will take the lion's share of the profits. They'll be looking to bribe or kill Dmitri's competitors... or anyone else who stands in their way."

You try to fit the pieces together in your head, but something isn't adding up.

"Do you know who the Koros agent poisoned by mistake?" you ask. "And who the real target was?"

"Unfortunately, no," replies Fennec. "The Broken Plough is Dmitri's biggest rival. It's possible the Circle tried to take him out and failed."

Kharzin seems unconvinced by this explanation. "How does the man from Koros figure into all of this?"

Fennec smiles and produces a pair of white robes remarkably similar to the ones the Koros agent was wearing.

"Clothing from Koros," he explains. "I suggest we pay a visit to that cooper. If we're lucky, they might simply hand us the delivery meant for the agent."

You examine the garments and roll your eyes. "You really think these are going to fool anyone?"

"Our only alternative would be to wait for nightfall," Fennec explains. "We could attempt to break in and recover the shipment ourselves."

"We have no idea when the agent is meant to pick up the delivery," Kharzin warns. "For all we know, by this evening it may already be gone."

Fennec nods thoughtfully. "I'm afraid both options come with their own risks," he admits.

Choose a path:

A. Sneak in at night.
Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Guild District.
Begin exploration phase
Upon arrival at Razdor: Guild District, proceed to page 30, and read Chapter 2:9

B. Bluff your way in during business hours.
Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Guild District.
Begin exploration phase
Upon arrival at Razdor: Guild District, proceed to page 31, and read Chapter 2:10

Chapter 2:9 Razdor: Guild District - Kharzin

At nightfall, you head to the cooper's shop. Though the stores in the business sector are all closed, you can still hear faint laughter and music drifting up from the various taverns along the main thoroughfare.

"Razdor is a city that never sleeps," Fennec explains wistfully.

"Who are we even here?" Vera asks Fennec. "You're the leader of the local resistance. Why do you care about the conflict in Mir?"

Fennec's face turns grim. "The politics are complicated," he admits, "but whoever controls Mir controls the food supply. That kind of power buys the influence that we desperately need. If the Circle of Seers finds a way to control both guilds, it'll leave us at a disadvantage. Starving people are easily controlled."

"Doesn't the king set the grain prices?" you wonder.

Fennec laughs. "Yes," he admits, "and then the guilds tack on their fees. They've become quite inventive over the years. Storage costs, delivery charges, administrative overhead... I suppose the king could ban such practices, but why would he? Karst is a mere puppet of the Circle of Seers."

Vera holds a finger to her lips, and the group falls silent. From the shadows, you watch as a member of the Guard patrols the street ahead of you. The slight swagger in his step suggests that he may have been drinking on duty.

"We're close," Fennec says once the Guard has passed.

Pressing a cloak against the glass, you carefully shatter the back window of the cooper's shop with the butt of your spear. One-by-one, you pass through. After a hasty search, you discover a small barrel marked "spoiled" in red block letters. You pry open the lid and sniff its contents. It smells of bitter almonds.

"Poison!" you tell them.

"I was hoping for some clue as to their intended target," Fennec admits. "We can confiscate the poison, but we will only be delaying their plans."

At that moment, you hear keys fumbling in the front door. You and Vera manage to duck behind the counter, but Fennec is stranded in the middle of the room when the Koros agent enters the room, followed by two zealots.

"What are you doing here!?" the Koros man stutters before Fennec flings a dagger into his chest. The zealots barely have time to draw their weapons before you and Vera charge them from behind the counter.

Battle Event
Place a "3 Star - Seer's Zealot' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 2.9 - Victory* below.

Chapter 2:9 - Victory

The last of the zealots slumps to the floor and Vera turns to Fennec. "Why did you kill him?"

I had no choice! They were going to kill me!"

"Now we'll never know who their target was," you say, stooping to check the bodies. "Unless we find a note or something."

"I'm sure they're too professional to carry notes around," replies Fennec.

"Whatever is going on here, I've lost interest," Vera says. "No more games Fennec. I've held up my end of the bargain. It's time for you to take me across the border."

"This isn't a game," Fennec assures her. "If the Circle controls Mir, they will also control Razdor. We may have taken their poison, but the Circle will simply find another way to eliminate Dmitri's rivals. I don't have time to help you right now. Not while there's still an immediate threat. We have to kill Dmitri. It's the only way to put an end to this."

"We had a deal," Vera reminds him.

"Help me end this," Fennec urges her. "One final assignment, and then I promise I'll take you to Falmund. You don't have to decide now. Sleep on it. We'll discuss the details in the morning."

Place a narrative chip on Razdor: Slums.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Razdor: Slums, proceed to page 33, and read Chapter 2:12.

Chapter 2:10 Razdor: Guild District - Kharzin

You can't help but think that people are staring at you. The robe hangs awkwardly on your shoulders, and you worry that others can sense your discomfort. A real Koros merchant wears their robe as though it were a second layer of skin. They don't pause every two minutes to adjust the fabric. At least you aren't alone in your torment. Vera seems just as uncomfortable.

"Why are we even here?" Vera asks Fennec. "You're the leader of the local resistance. Why do you care about the guilds, in M?"

Fennec's face turns grim. "The politics are complicated," he admits, "but whoever controls Mir controls the food supply. That kind of power buys the influence that we desperately need. If the Circle of Seers finds a way to control both guilds, it'll leave us at a disadvantage. Starving people are easily controlled."

Doesn't the king set the grain prices?" you wonder.

Fennec laughs. "Yes," he admits, "and then the guilds tack on their fees. They've become quite inventive over the years. Storage costs, delivery charges, administrative overhead... I suppose the king could ban such practices, but why would he? Karst is a mere puppet of the Circle of Seers."

"We're here," Fennec adds as you reach the shop. "Let me do the talking. We'll try to make this quick."

The cooper glances up at you, suspiciously as you enter.

"We've been told that a shipment has arrived for us," Fennec tells him, "but that our wine, unfortunately, has been spoiled. Nevertheless, we are here to collect."

The cooper's mouth opens in astonishment and then snaps shut again.

"I was expecting Vasos," he admits.

"Vasos failed in his mission," Fennec explains, "and our masters do not tolerate failure. We have been sent in his place."

There is a long, awkward silence. The cooper turns toward you, and his eyes narrow with suspicion.

"Praise Uvidet," you mutter gruffly. The words must sound odd on your lips, because Vera fakes a cough in order to distract the cooper.

Fennec glares at the cooper sternly. "Is there a problem?"

The cooper sighs and heads to the back room of the shop.

Fennec grits his teeth. "Praise Uvidet? Why would a Koros agent care about Uvidet?"

"I'm sorry," you say. "Deception isn't my strong suit."

The cooper returns with a small barrel, but before Fennec has a chance to accept it, Vera snatches it from the shopkeeper's hands.

"Be careful with this," the cooper urges. "It's the deadliest poison in Isofar. You drop this in a river and it will kill everything up to a half mile downstream."

"Don't worry, it's out of your hands now," Fennec responds.

The cooper nods grimly. He seems to feel some regret. Perhaps his participation in this matter has been somehow coerced.

Just as you leave the shop, you encounter the Koros agent, followed by two zealots. As they enter the shop, the man from Koros glances back at you with a puzzled look just as you slip around the corner. The moment you are out of their sight, you quicken your pace.

"The empty building," Fennec directs you, "dead ahead! It's as good a place to hide as any."

Move the Guards to Razdor: Slums. Proceed to page 32, and read Chapter 2:11.

Chapter 2:11 Razdor: Slums - Kharzin

The building you enter is nearly in ruins. You lay flat on the bare dirt floor behind a partially collapsed wall. A few moments later, you hear the Koros agent frantically shouting orders to the zealots as they pass by your hiding place.

When it feels safe to do so, you stand, brushing yourself off. Vera clutches the barrel of poison to her chest and turns to Fennec.

"This has gone on long enough," she says. "I've done my part, now take me across the border."

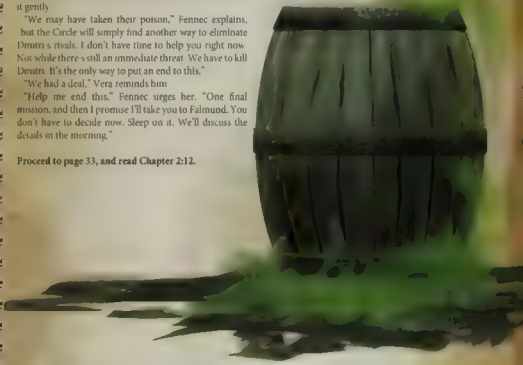
She thrusts the barrel into Fennec's arms, and he cradles it gently.

"We may have taken their poison," Fennec explains, "but the Circle will simply find another way to eliminate Dmitri's rivals. I don't have time to help you right now. Not while there's still an immediate threat. We have to kill Dmitri. It's the only way to put an end to this."

"We had a deal," Vera reminds him.

"Help me end this," Fennec urges her. "One final mission, and then I promise I'll take you to Falmund. You don't have to decide now. Sleep on it. We'll discuss the details in the morning."

Proceed to page 33, and read Chapter 2:12.



Chapter 2:12 Razdor: Slums - Vera

You're offered a cot in the underground base beneath the tavern. Though you've spent the night in far less comfortable spaces, you find it difficult to sleep. Kharzan, on the other hand, begins to snore almost the instant his head hits the pillow. Your irritation increases with each raspy inhale until you sit up on your cot, biting down on your fist and suppressing the sudden urge to scream.

Mixed with anger is a sudden pang of guilt. Kharzan shouldn't be here. You know he doesn't really approve of your plan to escape to Paran, though he would never be so cruel as to say so out loud. He probably thinks that you're a fool to seek out the father who abandoned you at birth. And yet he stays with you. You wonder how far Kharzan would go to protect you if you let him? Would he allow Fennec to string you both along for another day? A week? A month? Will he go along with Fennec's plan now that it involves assassinating Dmitri?

Your guilt again morphs into a sudden rage. You never asked for Kharzan's help. The fact that he was foolish enough to follow you this far doesn't mean you owe him anything. In any case, you have no intention of being a burden to anyone, not anymore.

Slowly and silently, you make your way up the stairs. You find a key hanging on the wall and use it to unlock the door into the tavern before slipping quietly out into the city streets.

For a moment, you feel like a kid again. There were many nights that you slipped quietly out of the orphanage, only to return before anyone noticed that you were missing. Tonight will be different. You have no intention of coming back.

You avoid Razdor's west gate by climbing a tree near the city wall and scrambling up and over to the other side. Then you take a deep breath in the hopes of settling your nerves.

"Whatever happens next," you remind yourself, "you're better off on your own."

Move Vera (Vera Bust Chip) to Node 105. Proceed to page 35, and read Chapter 2:13.

Chapter 2:13 Murus Bridge - Vera

You make your way to the bridge connecting Isofar and Falmund. On the other side stands Fort Murus. It's as intimidating and impenetrable as you imagined it to be. A sudden breeze sends a shiver down your spine. You count six archers stationed above the gate. If you were to approach, you'd most likely die in a hail of arrows. If you were very lucky, you might make it to the gate. Then what? Knock it down with pure force of will? Intimidate the dozens of soldiers inside into letting you pass upon pain of death?

"This isn't bravery," you finally admit to yourself. "It's stupidity."

Deflated, you turn back only to find Kharzin standing in the road behind you.

"So this is the thanks I get," your companion fumes. "After everything I've done to keep you safe, you leave without so much as a 'goodbye'."

"Kharzin, let me explain," you say.

"Isofar, the land that nourished you, suffers at the hands of its enemies. Yet you choose to run to a land you don't even remember, chasing the vain hope of finding a father you've never met. A father who, as far as you know, is already dead or, if living, likely wants nothing to do with you."

His rage startles you, and you find yourself muttering an apology. "I-I should have left a note. I'm sorry, but I didn't even go through with it. I was about to head back."

Kharzin either doesn't hear you or doesn't care. "The penalty for desertion is death," he answers coldly. There is a grim determination in his voice.

He pulls a spear out of thin air, but it's not a weapon you've ever seen. Impossibly, it's darker than the night sky. You have no time to wonder at this before Kharzin lunges toward you, his spear aiming for your heart.

Unwrap the "Campaign 3 Bosses" deck now. Place the cards and their corresponding separators in the card index box.

Battle Event

Place "Boss - Shadow Kharzin and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase (Vera only)

If Vera reaches 7 HP or less add Kharzin to battle immediately. Player may use both Guards in the following round.

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard
If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 2:13 - Victory* below.
Spirit Boss Challenge 4-3-1 now unlocked!

Chapter 2:13 - Victory

It's not long before the real Kharzin arrives to fight at your side. He pierces the doppelganger through the heart, causing it to shrivel like a rotten piece of fruit before exploding into a thick cloud of smoke.

"What... what was that thing?" you ask. If not for the adrenaline coursing through your veins, it would be easy to assume you dreamt the whole thing.

Kharzin shakes his head. "I don't know," he admits. "I only know that we've seen many strange things since the Voice started speaking to us, and we'll probably see a lot more."

"You... you called me a coward," you tell him. "The other version of you, I mean."

Kharzin bristles at this. "You are one of the bravest warriors I know," Kharzin insists.

"I'm not afraid of fighting," you say. "It's just... this isn't the life that I wanted, you know? I don't believe in destiny. I thought I should at least have a choice. Is that really so wrong?"

Kharzin looks thoughtful, before nodding respectfully. "If you don't want to fight, I can help you find that path."

You smile. "You mean find a plot of land to settle? Trade in my bow for a shovel and a wheelbarrow?" You turn the thought over in your head for a moment before setting it aside. Despite the charms, a domestic life is not for you. "Fennec asked for our help," you remind Kharzin, "and this Dmitri character sounds like he needs to be brought to justice. Just one more job, then we'll see."

Kharzin nods agreeably. He seems pleased. "Then we'll see," he repeats.

Move the Guards to Razdor: Slums. Proceed to page 37, and read Chapter 2:14.

Chapter 2:14 Razdor: Slums - Kharzin

You manage to slip back into the underground headquarters in time to grab a few hours of rest before Fennec finally wakes you.

"I hope you slept well," he says cheerfully. "Our next task will not be an easy one. We'll need all the strength we can muster if we hope to succeed."

"I slept like a baby," you answer, trying to mask the exhaustion in your voice. "What's the plan?"

Fennec smiles. "Even if it's decided? You'll help us!"

Vera nods. "One more assignment," she explains.

"We'll use Dmitri's weapon against him," Fennec explains. "There's a well on his property. If we poison the water supply, we can wipe out his entire army. With any luck, we'll be in and out without ever being detected."

You are hit by a sudden wave of disgust at the thought of killing in such a cowardly manner. "Poisoning... does not sit well with me," you explain.

Fennec appears sympathetic. "Dmitri's soldiers are responsible for countless atrocities," he says. "If we can be rid of his army, the people will thank us for it. But if you're having second thoughts—"

"We'll help you," Vera answers. "But the poison is a last resort. If we can get Dmitri alone, we may be able to end this whole thing."

Fennec nods appreciatively. "I know this is distasteful, but when the powerful are corrupted, we are forced to use unconventional methods. We are protecting those who cannot protect themselves."

Poisoning indiscriminately is not something to be considered lightly," Vera says. "We'll go and see things for ourselves, and then we'll make the call."

Fennec considers this and nods. "It may not feel like it, but this is a good thing we're doing. I'll finish packing our supplies, then we'll head out."

Vera turns to you. "Are you ready?"

"Are you sure this is wise?" you ask.

"If we don't go, Fennec will poison the well," she explains. "We need to see this man Dmitri for ourselves. If he's as bad as they say, then we may have no choice, but the poison is only a last resort."

You nod in agreement. "I'm with you."

I may not show it," Vera says, "but I'm glad you are."

Place a narrative chip on Node 83.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Node 83, proceed to page 38, and read Chapter 2.15.

Chapter 2:15 Golden Scythe Manor - Vera

You creep through a wheat field on your hands and knees until you come within sight of a mansion. "The well is not far from here," Fennec explains.

Nearby, a group of field hands are working the wheat fields. They drip with sweat as the sun beats down on them mercilessly. You catch sight of a man in white cotton robes leading a clayhorn through the fields. The clayhorn moves slowly, pulling a small cart full of waterskins behind it.

"That's Dmitri," Fennec explains, pointing to the man in the robes.

As Dmitri passes each worker, he pauses to hand out some water and share a few moments of conversation. He seems tired, or sad maybe. Though you aren't close enough to make out their words, the workers seem to be consoling Dmitri.

"So," you wonder incredulously, "this is the monster who poses a threat to all of Isofar?"

Fennec is irritated by this. "You've taken a single glance at this tyrant, and now, on that basis, judge him to be pure of heart? Why? Because he offered a field hand a glass of water? Believe me, Dmitri is guilty of unspeakable crimes."

From somewhere deep inside of you, a warning voice sounds. Instinctively, you try to repress the Voice, passing it off as nerves, but the Voice persists long enough to issue a clear warning: *Dmitri is not your enemy.* You look at Fennec and see the malice in his eyes.

"Just... don't let soldiers these are innocent civilians," you say. "Poisoning the well is no longer an option. We should abort the mission."

"I'm afraid it's too late for that," Fennec replies.

Kharzin shakes his head. "Vera is the lead here. If she says abort, we abort."

Fennec's eyes narrow and he lapses into silence. Suddenly, in a single deft movement, he removes an arrow from your quiver with one hand and seizes your bow in the other. Before you can even register what is happening, he's fired a shot. Incredibly, it hits Dmitri square in the chest, piercing his heart.

"What are you doing?" you demand, still trying to register what just happened.

"Finishing the mission," Fennec answers. He throws your bow at your feet and turns to run through the fields.

Move the Guards to Node 90. Proceed to page 39, and read Chapter 2:16.

Chapter 2:16 Wheat Fields - Kharzin

Fennec is fast, but he is no match for Vera's bow. One of her arrows clips Fennec's leg, causing him to stumble headfirst into the wheatfield and disappear from view.

You approach cautiously, the wheat limiting your view to a few feet. Without warning, Fennec leaps upward and flings a glass vial into the air. It shatters against the crown of your head, its poisonous contents dripping down your face and burning your eyes. Your vision becomes badly blurred.

Add 3 Poison chips to Kharzin's bag.

Battle Event - AMBUSH

Place 'Boss - Fennec' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to page 40, and read *Chapter 2:16 - Victory*.

Optional quest challenge C 3-2 now unlocked!

Chapter 2:16 Victory

Fennec staggers backward, spitting blood in your face before dropping to his knees.

"It doesn't matter what you do to me," he sneers. "I've killed my target."

"Why did you want Dmitri dead?" Vera demands. "Tell us the truth."

"Just following orders," he grimaces, gasping for breath. "Whose orders?" Vera demands. Almost instinctively, she removes her speaking stone from her pocket. It radiates with a dazzling light. As if in response, Fennec's entire demeanor seems to change. His smug smile fades and he glances up at Vera complacently.

"A merchant king from Koros," he explains. "He's in Silny, working with the Circle. Dmitri was always their target. I was ordered to finish the job if the Koros agent failed again."

You're astonished by this revelation, but Vera seems to take it in stride.

"There are four kings. Which one is it?" she asks.

Fennec's face tightens, and he grits his teeth, as if he were trying desperately to prevent himself from divulging any more secrets. You hear something crack in his mouth, and suddenly foam gushes from his lips. His head jerks forward violently, and his face turns blue. After a few short moments of agony, he dies.

"What just happened?" you ask.

"Poison," Vera states, shaking her head. "Fennec is a traitor and a coward."

"What do you want to do now?" you ask gently.

"The Circle of Seers is treacherous," Vera says. "Even more so now that they have outside help from this merchant king. Razdor's resistance movement may think of themselves as liberators, but they've been compromised at the highest level. I don't know who to trust anymore."

You nod grimly, unsure where Vera's thoughts are taking her.

"I've been running for so long," Vera sighs. "From... you, from Captain Grigory and the others. From anyone who ever cared about me. It's just that...I don't deserve...I'm...not a good person."

You take one look at Vera and your heart breaks. You wrap your arms around her and pull her close. "Stop al this talk," you say. "I followed you this far because you're family. Everyone deserves people who love them."

"But you don't know what I've done," Vera says, her voice breaking.

"No, but I know who you are," you say. "I know the Voice spoke to you. He chose you to be Stonebound."

You hold Vera for a few more moments until she collects herself and pulls away.

"Okay," Vera smiles. "No more running. We go back to our original mission of raising an army in Koros. However, one of the four kings of Koros is working against Isofar. We can't ask for aid without knowing which one it is."

You can't help but smile at how quickly Vera gets back to business. "I guess we go to Silny," you say.

Just then, you hear soldiers shouting in the fields.

"We have to get out of here," Vera says. "There's nothing we can do for Dmitri and we can't trust anyone in Razdor. If we ever get the chance, we can come back and make amends."

You look at Vera and nod. There's nothing left for you to do but run.

END OF CHAPTER 2

Exploration Phase now uses Enemy Index Chapter 3. See page 9 in the Enemy Index Book.

A new Caravan Quest is available!

Move the Caravan Chip to Node 68. Caravan Quest 2 is now available. See page 140 in the Quests book.

New Side Quests are available!

Additional Side Quests are now available for Chapter 3. See page 57 in the Quests Book.

Place a narrative chip on Node 32.

Begin exploration phase. Upon arrival at Node 32, proceed to page 42, and read Chapter 3:1.

Chapter 3:1 Silny: Seer's Gate - Vera

The road to Silny is blocked by a crowd gathered at the Seer's Gate. Looking over the shoulders of the people in front of you, you spot the reason for the delay. The Kingsguard are questioning each and every traveler entering the city. You glance over at your companion. With his spear and shield in hand, Kharzin is not likely to pass for a farmer or a traveling merchant.

"So now instead of being captured or killed crossing the border into Falmund," you mutter, "I'm going to be captured or killed walking into Silny. Big improvement."

"The Voice will protect us," Kharzin says.

"I'm not sure that's how it works," you say. "But who knows? I'm just along for the ride now."

There is a family of farmers ahead of you in a elkhorn-drawn cart filled with beets and carrots. They don't seem like much of a threat. If you tried to join their group, you might attract less attention from the guards.

"This isn't the only entrance to the city," Kharzin reminds you. "We might have better luck at the King's Gate."

Stonebound have returned from their Commissions

Record gathered materials in the Fort Istra Stash and remove all cubes from the map. Reference page 5 in the Fort Istra & Save Index Book to send out **Commission Three**.

Choose a path:

A. Sneak in with the farmers.
Proceed to page 43, and read Chapter 3.2

B. Check the King's Gate.
Place a narrative chip on Node 33

Begin exploration phase

Upon arrival at Node 33, proceed to page 44, and read Chapter 3.3

Chapter 3:2 Silny: Seer's Gate - Kharzin

Vera grabs hold of your shoulder. As the cart begins to move forward, she limps toward the gate.

"Are you wounded?" you ask. For a second, she glares at you, like you're an idiot. Then she frowns and groans softly as if she were in pain.

One of the farmers ahead of you turns to shake her head. "Bad enough having to stand out here," she says, "without seeing to you carrying on."

"I hurt my leg," Vera explains. "Would you mind if I sat on your cart? Just until we reach Rynok Square."

The woman rolls her eyes, but then briefly nods her assent. Vera hops on board. The children seated next to her amble when Vera pulls a shiny red apple from her pocket.

"Can you share?" Vera asks, skeptically. When the children solemnly nod their heads, she hands the apple to the youngest and they pass the fruit between them.

"My companion isn't as spry as he used to be," Vera says to the woman. "It'd be a kindness to let him stash his spear and shield in your cart. I suppose if we covered them with a few vegetables, things might go easier with the gatekeeper." She does her best to make this sound like an innocent request.

The woman hurrumphs. "If you want my help smuggling weapons into Silny," she says, "it'll cost you something more than a shiny red apple."

"We don't want to have people hurt us escort us, you, through the city," Vera reminds her. "If you run into any difficulty, they'll think twice about causing trouble."

The woman considers this proposal. She stares at you briefly, as if attempting to gauge your strength and valor. Then she nods, accepting Vera's terms. "They call me Adhalia," she says.

"You have a lovely family, Adhalia," Vera answers kindly.

For the briefest of moments, Adhalia's stoic expression melts, and she nods at her children with a smile. You can't help but share your head. If she put her mind to it, Vera could charm a snake into giving up its fangs.

As you near the gate, Vera scoops some dirt up from the side of the road and rubs a little onto her hands and clothes. Soon, she does the same to you. If this is a ruse, it was an attempt to make you blend in; the guards at the gate are not particularly impressed by your efforts.

"Nice threads for a farmer," one of the Kingsguard sneers as she pinches Vera's clothes between her fingers.

Fearlessly, Adhalia slaps the man's outstretched hand. "You don't lay your hands on a lady," she warns. "Didn't your mother raise you right?" The Kingsguard's eyes widen, startled by her boldness.

I only meant—"

Before he can explain, Adhalia cuts him off. "And I suppose harassing folk out here makes you feel like something special. Picking through vegetable carts and making children and babies swelter out here in the middle sun. If I thought you were capable of shame I'd say you should be ashamed of yourselves."

For a moment, the guard is overcome with rage. Incredibly, his eyes burn a fiery red. Then as it coming to his senses, he's made back to a dull brown and he shakes his head sheepishly.

Just doing our jobs, ma'am," he says. Cowed by Adhalia's fury, the Kingsguard make a cursory inspection of her cart before waving you through.

I can't believe that worked," you whisper.

They're not soldiers," Adhalia sneers. "They're children. I've raised seven boys of my own. If there's one thing I know how to do it's put the fear of Vaidet back into a young man who has lost his way."

"And don't I'm ask for a moment that I didn't notice those eyes," she adds. "Things have gotten bad in Silny."

Move the Guards to Silny: Rynok Square (Mini Map).
Proceed to page 45, and read Chapter 3:4.

Chapter 3:3 Silny: King's Gate - Kharzin

Though there is less of a crowd gathered at the Southern entrance that just makes each traveler stand out more. As you approach the two Guards are busy harassing a young man in green furs.

I'm just here to see my sister," the man pleads.

Young men traveling on their own are always the most suspicious," one of the Guards explains matter of factly. "Or worse. No family. A force with nothing left to lose."

I have a family," the man explains. I just told you, my sister. I came my sister."

Well, where is she?" the Guard demands, his arms spread wide. "Seems to me you're massing the whole thing up."

I don't understand," the man admits. "Why would I be about something like that?"

"Well, that's the question isn't it?" the Guard explains. "It's as we know, you were the one who attacked the Eyes!"

The color drains from the young man's face. "Me?!" he cries.

The second Guard laughs. "Look at the size of his arms. He couldn't even swing a sword."

Shut," says the first Guard, "we'd better loosen his tongue." The Guard punches the young man in the gut, knocking him to the ground.

You feel your heart pounding in your chest and without meaning it your hand tightens into a fist. You step forward, placing yourself between the young man and the Guards. "I believe my arms are sufficiently sized to swing a sword," you tell them. "Perhaps you ought to be talking to me."

The Guards try to put on a brave face, but it's clear that they're not used to being challenged. "Who are you supposed to be?" one of them demands.

We're Guards, same as you," Vera tells them, stepping forward to stand at your side. "Well, not exactly the same as you. We've been busy defending the kingdom against real threats, not picking on defenseless farmers."

The Guard smiles and his eyes flash red. "Members of the Guard, you say?" he laughs. "Are you loyal to Grigori, or to the crown?"

The question takes you by surprise. As does the fire in the Guard's eyes. Sensing your hesitation, the corrupted Guards are off with no doubt about where your loyalties truly lie. They charge forward, weapons drawn.

Battle Event

Place a 3 Star Corrupted Guard and Al Jedok on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 and slot 11 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 3.3 - Victory* below.

Chapter 3:3 - Victory

Even after the battle is over, you have trouble believing what you have now seen with your own eyes: members of the Guard fully corrupted. The taint of Lenebris was unmistakable.

"It looks like our friend has risen off," you say, noticing the young man's absence.

Yeah," says Vera. "He took off during the fight, and I don't blame him. Word of this will spread steadily."

"That may be a good thing. People need to know what's really happening."

"True," replies Vera, "but I have a feeling the enemy is going to come out of the shadows. We're going to have to be more careful, from here on."

Place a narrative chip on Silny: Rynok Square (Mini Map).

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Silny: Rynok Square, proceed to page 46, and read Chapter 3:5.

Chapter 3:4 Silny: Rynok Square - Vera

Adhalia drops you off at Rynok Square

"Be careful," she warns. "The Kingsguard are just a symptom of a bigger problem. Siny has always had its fair share of rotten eggs, but it's worse than ever. If you stay in this city too long, it changes you, and not for the better."

One of the children secretly stuffs a plump carrot into Kharzin's pocket without him noticing. "Goodbye, gentle giant!" one of them whispers fondly, and the others laugh

After they depart, Kharzin discovers his prize. He smiles sheepishly and seems uncertain what to do

"The carrot was not the child's to give," he explains. "It belongs to her mother. Should I-?"

"Keep it," you assure him. "It's just a carrot."

While you're dealing with Kharzin's moral quandary, sudden.y, you catch sight of something strange. A woman stops to adjust her coat, briefly revealing the armor hiding underneath. What's more, she looks vaguely familiar

You point the woman out to Kharzin. "Is that... Katiya?"

Kharzin shoves the carrot back in his pocket and spots the woman

"Maybe?" he says, unsure

You grab his arm and pull him through the square, hot on the woman's trail. She is soon joined by a young man in a green tunic. Together, they enter the Raven's Beak Inn

Move the Guards to Silny: Raven's Beak Inn. Proceed to page 47, and read Chapter 3:6.

Chapter 3:5 Silny: Rynok Square - Vera

At first, life seems to carry on as normal in Rynok Square. A dog perches behind a bakery window, barking at passersby as they shuffle through the cobblestone streets. A fruit vendor announces his prices, spitting the words out in a rapid, barely decipherable blur. A man, half drunk, strums a lute from a street corner and sings off key. Yet, just below the surface something is off. The people seem on edge, walking with quick steps and hunched shoulders. Most refuse to make eye contact with you, and those that do offer only dark stares. Ahead of you, a woman emerges from a shop clutching a basket to her chest. She is so intent on the road in front of her that she bumps into Kharzin, jostling her basket, spilling several eggs onto the ground

"My apologies," Kharzin begins, but the woman is so startled that she flees the scene, leaving her spoiled eggs for someone else to worry about

"Looks like you're quite the do gooder," a man's voice says from behind you. You turn and see the young man in the green tunic you helped at the gate, now sporting a bruised lip

"I just wanted to say thank you, friends," he says. "I'm sorry I ran off, but I'm no match for those Guards, and you two look like you can handle yourselves." The young man's smile shines like a beacon amidst the sea of sad faces

"I'm sure your sister will be happy to see you," Kharzin says, "and to know that you're safe."

The man laughs. "Oh! Turns out I don't have a sister after all!" He offers a sly wink to Kharzin and slaps him on the back. Before Kharzin can fully express his discomfort at these overly familiar gestures, the man's eyes light up and he cuts the conversation short

"My friend is here," he explains. "It's been an honor and a privilege." He offers you both a short bow before running to greet his companion. To your surprise, the woman looks vaguely familiar

"Wait," you say to Kharzin, "is that... Katiya?"

Kharzin stares at the young man's friend across the street, squinting his eyes. "I'm not certain."

The woman stops to adjust her coat. When she does, the armor hiding underneath glints briefly in the sunlight. You grab Kharzin's arm and pull him through the square, hot on the woman's trail. You watch them enter the Raven's Beak Inn, and wait a few moments before following them inside

Move the Guards to Silny: Raven's Beak Inn. Proceed to page 47, and read Chapter 3:6.

Chapter 3:6 Silny: Raven's Beak Inn - Kharzin

The inn is crowded, but the woman and the young man in the green tunic find seats at one of the few open tables. There is a flash of recognition in her eyes when she looks up at you, but then she quickly averts her gaze as if hoping you simply wouldn't notice her. Vera was right. It is Kativa, a member of the Guard. Yet she's hiding her armor and refuses to acknowledge your presence. Something is clearly wrong.

Vera tugs at your sleeve, pulling you down into a chair. You watch and wait, listening for anything that might give you some clue as to what is going on.

"I didn't know her well," Vera admits, "but Kativa is a good Guard. We should just go over there. If she's been stationed in Silny, she may know something about the Koros merchant king."

You nod grimly. Kativa is a woman you have always held in high esteem, but your encounter with the corrupted soldiers guarding the gates of Silny has given you pause.

"Something is going on here," you say. "I know Kativa recognized us, but for some reason she's ignoring us. It might be better to wait and see why."

Suddenly, you hear a loud whistle coming from outside. Kativa and her companion quickly scramble to their feet. The man in the green tunic knocks his chair over as they break into a mad dash toward the kitchen. You hear the sound of clanging pots and an angry chef as they make their way out back. Before you can follow them, a group of Kingsguard bursts through the front door.

Choose a path.

A. Stay seated and see what happens.
Proceed to page 49 and read Chapter 3:7.

B. Escape through the kitchens.
Proceed to page 50, and read Chapter 3:8.

Chapter 3:7 Silny: Raven's Beak Inn - Vera

A deathly silence falls over the inn as the Kingsguard slowly wander from table to table. The other customers sit perfectly still with their hands flat next to their plates in front of them. It all seems too-well rehearsed, as if inspections of this kind were an everyday occurrence. A stray cough from an older man at a corner table draws the attention of one of the guards. He slides the old man's soup bowl across the table, allowing it to drop and shatter against the floor. He waits to see if the old man will take any action to defend himself. When he doesn't, the guard grunts approvingly and continues to circle the room.

Seeing your weapons, a few of the Kingsguard surround your table. One takes a seat next to you. He brings a plate of chicken with him, stolen from one of the other tables, and he begins thoughtfully gnawing on the bones.

"What brings you to Silny?" he asks without bothering to glance up from his plate.

"We own a farm about thirty miles from here," you explain. "We came into town for supplies."

A thin smile ripples across the guard's face. "Farmers," he says. "That's the best you could come up with? Should I give you a few minutes to come up with a better story?"

You glance at Kharzin, but your companion shakes his head. He's right. There are too many soldiers here to fight, and too many civilians whose lives would be put at risk if you caused any trouble.

"You'll be coming with us," the guard explains as he finishes off his plate.

Though every muscle in your body seems to urge you to stand and fight, you go quietly, allowing the Kingsguard to take you captive.

Move the Guards to Silny: Rynok Square. Proceed to page 51, and read Chapter 3:9.

Chapter 3:8 Silny: Raven's Beak Inn - Vera

The moment you stand, one of the guards shouts, "Sit back down!" The others draw their weapons, charging toward you. If you were hoping to slip out unseen, there's not much hope of that now.

You run through the kitchen, bursting out the back door and stumbling into the alley behind the inn. Unfortunately, there are already two Kingsguard stationed here blocking the exit.

Battle Event

Place a '3 Star - Kingsguard' and A1 deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 3:8 - Victory* below.

Chapter 3:8 - Victory

Even as you dispatch the two Kingsguard standing in front of you, more pour out from the backdoor of the inn. You reach behind your back for another arrow, finding your quiver empty. As the Kingsguard race forward, you take a deep breath, raising your fists. You might not be able to do much more than break one of their noses before they cut you to pieces, but at least you won't go down without a fight.

To your surprise, the Kingsguard never reach you. They are cut down in a hail of arrows from the rooftops.

A voice cries out from above you. "Follow us. Quickly! More are headed this way."

It's Katrya.

Stonebound have returned from their Commissions. Record gathered materials in the Fort Istra Stash and remove all cubes from the map. Reference page 6 in the Fort Istra & Save Index Book to send out **Commission Four!**

Move the Guards to Silny: Tower District. Proceed to page 52, and read Chapter 3:10.

Chapter 3:9 Silny: Rynok Square - Kharzin

You feel helpless as you and Vera are led through the square with your hands tied behind your back. The Kingsguard at your back prod you forward, while those in front aggressively clear the way of pedestrians using their heavy shields. A minor panic ensues as people scramble to get out of your way, knocking each other over and spilling more than one merchant's wares into the street. One merchant tries to save her fine silks, but she is shoved roughly out the way and her silks are trampled into the ground. You spot several groups of people ducking into alleyways to escape the Kingsguard

"Huh," Vera says to the guard behind her. "Looks like the people you were sworn to protect are absolutely terrified of you. I wonder why that is?"

The guard shoves Vera so hard that she loses her balance and falls to the ground.

"And here I thought we were going to be best friends," she says, struggling to get to her knees

Just as the man is preparing to bring the butt of his sword crashing down into the back of Vera's skull, an arrow cuts through the air, hitting him directly between the eyes. As he topples backward, the other Kingsguard scramble to mount a defense, but several well-placed arrows later, the Kingsguard are all dead at your feet

Katiya leans out from one of the rooftops

"Follow us," she says. "Quickly! There are eyes everywhere."

Stonebound have returned from their Commissions.
Record gathered materials in the Fort Istra Stash and remove all cubes from the map. Reference page 6 in the Fort Istra & Save Index Book to send out **Commission Four**

Move the Guards to Silny: Tower District. Proceed to page 52, and read Chapter 3:10.

Chapter 3:10 Silny: Tower District - Kharzin

Katiya leads your small group in silence as you work your way through the meandering back alleys of the Tower District. You soon come upon a dilapidated house and step through the back entrance into a darkened room. The windows have all been boarded up, and there is no furniture, just a few bedrolls spread across the floor. Katiya lights a few half melted candles on the hearth of a cold fireplace

Katiya smiles. "It's not much, but it's our home away-from-home." She nods toward her companions, introducing the man in the green tunic as Ivan and the others as Mara and Alysha

"Those of us in the Guard who remain loyal to Grigory have started an underground resistance," Katiya explains. "We're going to root out the corruption at its source. If that means starting a revolution, so be it."

And if the king himself bears the blame for this," Ivan adds, "then even he will answer for his crimes."

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves," Katiya cautions. "We're in no position to challenge the king. Yet."

"What's happened here?" Vera asks. "Why has the king turned against the people?"

"We don't know," Katiya says. "It started when Captain Grigory was exiled. There were rumors he was rambling about the Stonebound or that he was Stonebound. I dismissed it all as superstitious nonsense, but then I saw him."

"Who? Grigory?" you ask. "How long ago was this?"

"Two weeks maybe? He and another Guard, Alek, helped us rescue Alysha, Ivan, and Mara from being executed."

"He invited us to join him at a base in the south," Ivan says, "but things got really bad here."

"Bad how?" asks Vera

"The Kingsguard," Mara says, "and some others in the regular Guard who couldn't see what was happening. They changed almost overnight."

"They got mean," Alysha says, drawing all eyes to her. "Surely, you've noticed? I had friends who became someone else, *something* else, doing things they never would've done before

"And there are stories coming in from outside the city," Katiya says. "Monsters roaming the land, attacking people. Something is very wrong with the world, and we're trying to fix it."

How can we help?" you ask

"If you're up for it," says, "I have two jobs for you."

The first is to find out what's happening to the people here. The Kingsguard have started clearing out the slums. Sometimes there's a pretext for the arrests. Loitering. Noise complaints. But now they don't even give a reason, they just barge into peoples' homes and take whoever they want. No explanation. No chance for appeal. We need to know where they're taking them and why."

"Where should we start?" Vera asks.

"There's a man in the slums by the name of Fenyo," Katiya answers. "He's helped us in the past. Make contact with him and he may have more information."

"And the other job?" you ask

Katiya pulls some bread out of a pack in the corner and hands it to Mara to divide and pass out before continuing. "A caravan from Koros has holed up in the Seer's Tower. We suspect that they might have something to do with the abductions. But even if they don't, we still need to know what interest Koros has in Silny."

"We've been tracking one of the merchant kings from Koros," Vera explains. "Someone with dealings in both Razdor and Mir. That's what led us here."

Katiya shakes her head. "Are things as bad everywhere as they are here?" she questions, but it seems she already senses the answer.

A shadow has fallen over Isofar," you tell her. "Maybe if we stop this Koros king and find out who he's working with here in Isofar, we can reclaim our land from this madness."

Katiya nods thoughtfully and stares at the floor, as if steeling herself for the task ahead. "It's not safe to stay in the city," she says. "At least, not in large numbers. We have a camp in the woods just north of Silny. When you've completed your missions, meet us there."

Choose a path:

A. Check the Slums.
Move the Guards to Silny: Slums. Proceed to page 53, and read Chapter 3:11

B. Check the Seer's tower.
Move the Guards to Silny: Seer's Tower. Proceed to page 57, and read Chapter 3:14.

Chapter 3:11 Silny: Slums - Vera

You walk down Fenya's street keeping your eyes and ears open for any sign of the Kingsguard. As you approach Fenya's house, you can't shake the feeling that you're being watched. You sense movement from a second story window, but when you turn your head, whoever was there is gone. A stone flies through the air, narrowly missing your head. Another lands near your feet, clattering against the cobblestones. Suddenly, you realize what is happening.

"They think we're soldiers," you say to Kharzin. "I mean. . we are soldiers. You know what I mean."

You reach Fenya's house without further incident, and softly knock on the door.

After a few moments, a man opens the door and looks you and Kharzin over with a critical eye.

"Are you with Katiya?" he asks.

"We are," you answer. "How did you know?"

"The other soldiers don't knock. Please, come in off the street."

You follow Fenya into his house and he offers you and Kharzin a seat at his table. All of Fenya's furniture seems to be hobbled together from scrap wood, but he keeps a tidy house.

"We're here to find out about the Kingsguard," Kharzin asks. "Katiya told us they've been taking people."

"They started cracking down on the usual suspects a few weeks ago," Fenya explains. "Pickpockets, gang leaders, smugglers. Just taking out the trash, they told us. And we didn't complain much, 'cause we thought they were finally doing their jobs. Then the Kingsguard came and started arresting the family members of the criminals called 'em 'colluders'. After that, there were some protests, so they arrested the protestors. Finally, they just started arresting anyone. No reason, no pattern. They just come and pull us off the street. Everyone's afraid to leave their houses."

"Where are they taking all the people that they arrest?" Kharzin asks.

"A good question," Fenya admits. "Be a big help to us if you guys could figure that out."

"Why round up civilians?" you ask. "What's the point?"

Fenya shrugs. "I don't know why they're doing it," he admits, "but if they wanted to scare us, it's working. People are wound up so tight, they've started turning each other in. Someone complains about the Kingsguard, and their neighbors report it. If you snitch, the Kingsguard will leave you alone . at least for a little while."

"Has anyone ever come back?" you ask.

Fenya takes a deep breath and slowly shakes his head. You can tell that he's holding back tears.

"They took my wife three days ago," he says. "I haven't seen her since. No, nobody's come back. Not yet."

Just then, you hear shouting from outside. You step out into the street and see two Kingsguard banging on a door down the street.

"By order of First Blade Sacha, you're under arrest!" one of them yells.

Choose a path:

A. Attempt to stop them.
Proceed to page 54, and read Chapter 3:12

B. Wait and see what happens.
Move the Guards to Silny: Castle Strig. Proceed to page 56, and read Chapter 3:13

Chapter 3:12 Silny: Slums - Kharzin

You arrive in time to watch two Kingsguard drag a teenage boy down the front steps of his home. Though he doesn't lift a finger to defend himself, the guards act as if the boy was being difficult.

"Stop struggling!" one of them shouts, twisting the boy's arm behind his back until he cries out in pain, while the other guard laughs.

"Please," the boy's mother begs, "someone gave you the wrong name. It was a simple misunderstanding."

The second guard, seemingly delighted by the mother's pain, reaches out to grab her too, but stops when he sees you and Vera approach.

"We don't need any help," he warns.

"What makes you think we're here to help you?" Vera asks.

"You'll not take him from us," the first guard snarls, clutching the boy tightly. "Find your own prey."

"Prey?!" you shout. "This is an innocent boy! Release him. Now."

The Kingsguard narrows his eyes and shoves the boy to the ground. "Back off now, Guard," he says. "This is none of your business."

"I'm making it my business," you tell him.

"You're making your own grave!" the other Kingsguard snarls, snapping his jaws.

Both Kingsguard lunge towards you and Vera, their eyes flashing a fiery red.

Battle Event

Place a '3 Star - Kingsguard' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to page 55, and read *Chapter 3:12 Victory*

Chapter 3:12 - Victory

The grateful mother clasps her son tightly to her chest. "Thank you," she weeps. "There aren't many left in Silny who would help a stranger."

The boy, embarrassed by his mother's embrace, gently breaks free of her grip.

"Why did they arrest you?" Vera asks the boy.

"My friend and I work at the tannery," the boy explains. "Yesterday, his brother went missing, and we skipped work to look for him. We figured the Kingsguard had swept him up in one of their raids, and there was nothing we could do about it. Today, we went back to work and tried to explain everything, but our boss said he was gonna report us to the Kingsguard. Said we were traitors and deserved to be taken away. I ran home as fast as I could to warm my mother, but the Kingsguard weren't far behind."

"And you friend?" you ask.

"Nadden," the boy says. "I just hope he's okay."

"Do you know where they're taking everyone?" Vera asks.

"No," the boy admits. "The people who ask those kinds of questions are the first to get taken away."

Vera kneels down and searches through the belongings of the Kingsguard. She fishes out a note and hands it to you. It contains orders from First Blade Sacha to round up citizens and bring them to Castle Strig. Young men and women "of fighting age" should be prioritized over others.

You turn to the boy. "Looks like they were looking for new recruits," you explain. "I know you're young, but the time has come to choose a side. There are still Guards who are loyal to Isofar. We're trying to stop whatever madness has taken hold, and we need everyone's help. Even if you stay out of the fighting, you could help gather information and supplies."

"I have a stack of leather I was supposed to deliver to the Kingsguard," the boy answers excitedly. "It's yours if you want it."

You accept his offering gratefully. "We'll put it to good use," you assure him.

Obtain: 4x Rough Leather (Enemy Drop)

After letting the boy and his mother know how to get in touch with Katiya, Vera pulls you aside.

"Castle Strig is heavily guarded," she reminds you. "If we're finished with our investigation, we should report back to Katiya and come up with a plan."

Choose a path:

A. If 'Check the Seer's Tower' (page 52) is complete, place a narrative chip on Node 17.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Node 17, proceed to page 62, and read Chapter 3:19.

B. If 'Check the Seer's Tower' (page 52) is NOT complete, place a narrative chip on Silny: Seer's Tower.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Silny: Seer's Tower, proceed to page 57, and read Chapter 3:14.

Chapter 3:13 Silny: Castle Strig - Kharzin

You watch helplessly as the Kingsguard drag a teenage boy down the front steps of his home, and roughly march him through the streets.

You follow from a safe distance as they journey from the slums into the wider, pristine streets of Silny's Royal District. When the locals see the Kingsguard approaching, they quickly hide in their homes, locking their doors and snapping their curtains shut. In the unnatural silence, you can hear the boy pleading with the Kingsguard from a block away.

Soon, the two guards reach the outer wall of Castle Strig, and drag the boy through its massive double doors, which are slammed shut behind them.

Vera lets out a low whistle. "Well," she says, "at least now we know where they're taking everyone. It would be crazy to storm the castle by ourselves. And not the good kind of crazy, either. If we're finished with our investigation, maybe we should report back to Katiya and come up with a plan."

Choose a path:

A. If 'Check the Seer's Tower' (page 52) is complete, place a narrative chip on Node 17.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Node 17, proceed to page 63, and read Chapter 3:19.

B. If 'Check the Seer's Tower' (page 52) is NOT complete, move the Guards to Silny: Seer's Tower. Proceed to page 57, and read Chapter 3:14.

Chapter 3:14 Silny: Seer's Tower - Vera

You decide to investigate the Koros merchants last spotted near the Seer's Tower. The buildings in this neighborhood are almost works of art. The cobblestone streets look clean enough to eat off of, and every nook and cranny seems to have been filled with a statue or marble fountain. If you had the time, you'd love nothing more than to stop and admire every perfectly manicured rose garden and intricately detailed stained-glass window

It's all so immaculate, in fact, that you start to feel self-conscious. You can't quite remember the last time you've bathed. It doesn't normally bother you, but you catch yourself sniffing your armpits, deciding that a bath might be overdue.

As you near the Seer's Tower, you spot a few Kingsguard escorting a small group of people out of the tower. You can tell by their elegant silk robes that some of them are from Koros. The group passes directly in front of you, coming so close that you catch a whiff of perfume . The smell triggers a powerful memory. You're seven years old, picking blueberries with the other orphans in a wide open meadow. There's a waterfall behind you, filling the air with a thick mist

When you open your eyes, Kharzin is making a face at you; all furrowed brows and squinted eyes

"Their perfume," you explain. "It smells like blueberries." This particular explanation does not seem to alleviate any of Kharzin's concerns. "Come on," you sigh. "Let's see where they're going."

Move the Guards to Silny: Tower District. Proceed to page 58, and read Chapter 3:15.

Chapter 3:15 Silny: Tower District - Kharzin

You try to follow the Koros merchants through the Tower District streets, but there are Kingsguard on nearly every corner. It soon becomes very clear to them that you do not belong here, and two soldiers begin moving in your direction

"Keep walking," Vera whispers to you.

"Hey, you there!" one of the guards shouts. "What are you doing here?"

Desperate to remain inconspicuous, you pretend like you don't hear the Kingsguard and begin a conversation with Vera

I don't remember these buildings," you say in an exaggerated voice. "I think we took a wrong turn somewhere."

Vera catches on and nods at you just as the two Kingsguard arrive

Oh good, *real* soldiers are here." Vera says before either of the Kingsguard can say anything. "Sirs, I was wondering if either of you could direct us to the Raven's Beak. This one's not so good with directions," Vera says, pointing her thumb at you

"What are you two doing here?" the Kingsguard asks.

"I just told you," replies Vera, "we're looking for the Raven's Beak."

"What you're looking for is a jail cell," the Kingsguard answers. "We just arrested a den of traitors at The Raven's Beak. If you're looking to go there, you must be one of them."

The guard pulls out a short length of rope and prepares to bind your hands behind your back.

"Come on," he says. "We're taking you in."

Choose a path:

A. Allow yourself to be taken captive?
Move the Guards to Node 19 Proceed to page 59, and read Chapter 3:16.

B. Fight the Kingsguard?
Proceed to page 60, and read Chapter 3:17.

Chapter 3:16 Barren Road - Vera

Your hands are tightly bound, and your weapons confiscated. To your surprise, the guards lead you out of the city through the Barren Gate.

"Where are you taking us?" you demand, but the guards ignore you.

Outside the gate, you meet up with the same group of Koros merchants you followed earlier.

"You're late," one of the merchants complains to the Kingsguard, "and we're already behind schedule. Those ships should have already been halfway to Razdor by now."

"Hey, we filled our quotas," one of the guards snaps back. "But these two seemed eager to volunteer. Call it a bonus."

"Get them loaded into the cart," the merchant answers. Together, they push you up onto a small clayhorn-drawn cart, stowing your weapons in a trunk in the back.

Why would men of Isofar take orders from the King of Koros?" you ask the Kingsguard, hoping to exploit the tensions between the merchants and the soldiers.

"Shut up," one of the Kingsguard snaps.

"Chrimata is more than a king," the Koros merchant answers. "He has become a god."

"Uvidet is the one true god," the soldier retorts.

The merchant laughs. "To the small-minded, perhaps," he says. "But those who follow Chrimata have seen his power. Uvidet is either dead or never leaves his mountain home. He walks among the living!"

Without warning, the Kingsguard runs the Koros merchant through with his blade.

"Does anyone else wish to blaspheme against our god?" he demands. "If so, step forward."

"You will pay for this, slave!" shouts one of the merchants, before a Kingsguard runs him through as well. After this, total mayhem ensues. You are quickly pushed aside and forgotten as the Kingsguard draw their weapons and charge the helpless Koros merchants.

While everyone is distracted, you crouch down and take a knife from the belt of one of the dead merchants and use it to cut Kharzin's bindings. When he is free, he cuts your bindings as well, and you both retrieve your weapons.

When you turn back to the fight, you are surprised to see all but two of the Kingsguard are dead. It turns out, the Koros merchants weren't as helpless as they looked.

Battle Event

Place a '3 Star - Kingsguard' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 3:16: Victory* below

Chapter 3:16 - Victory

Despite being arrested and nearly shipped off, you've collected some valuable intel. The Kingsguard have been helping Koros merchants load captives onto ships north of Silny. They plan to take everyone they've rounded up to Razdor. Katiya will want to hear of this.

Choose a path:

A. If 'Check the Slums' (page 52) is complete, move the Guards to Node 17. Proceed to page 62, and read Chapter 3:19.

B. If 'Check the Slums' (page 52) is NOT complete, move the Guards to Silny: Slums. Proceed to page 53, and read Chapter 3:11.

Chapter 3:17 Silny: Tower District - Vera

Battle Event

Place a '3 Star - Kingsguard' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 3:17: Victory* below

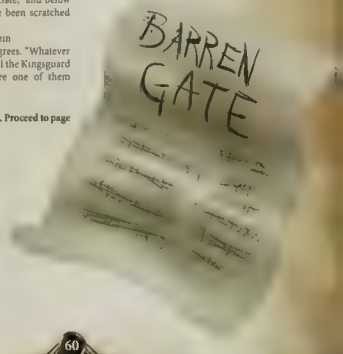
Chapter 3:17 - Victory

When the Kingsguard are finally defeated, you search their belongings, discovering a note in one of their pockets. At the top it reads "Barren Gate," and below that is a long list of names that have been scratched out.

"What do you think?" you ask Kharzin.

"It's worth checking out," Kharzin agrees. "Whatever we do, we should do it quickly. With all the Kingsguard in the area, it won't be long before one of them discovers these bodies."

Move the Guards to Silny: Barren Gate. Proceed to page 61, and read Chapter 3:18.



Chapter 3:18 Silny: Barren Gate - Vera

Just outside the Barren Gate, you discover a group of Koros merchants standing next to a clayhorn drawn cart. Very odd, to say the least.

"Well?" one of them demands, when they see you. "Have you really shown up empty handed?"

They seem to have mistaken you for their allies. You choose to play along.

"We ran into some difficulties," you explain.

The merchant sighs. "This isn't difficult. We need warm bodies, you go get the warm bodies. If one of the names on your list gives you trouble, just grab someone else."

"We're behind schedule because of idiots like you! Our ships should be halfway to Razdor by now!"

"We'll double our efforts." Kharzin assures them.

The merchant's lips curl with disgust. "It's not me you have to answer to," he reminds you. "It's King Chrimata. It would not be wise to displease a god."

You nod solemnly and take your leave.

"King Chrimata," you say to Kharzin once you're back in the city. "Now we know who we're dealing with."

"Soldiers of Isofar serving at the beck and call of the King of Koros," Kharzin sighs. "I never thought I'd live to see the day."

"But why round up civilians?" you ask. "And why ship them to Razdor?"

"Whatever the reason," Kharzin answers, "Katiya will want to hear of this."

Choose a path

A If 'Check the Slums' (page 52) is complete, move the Guards to Node 17. Proceed to page 62, and read Chapter 3:19.

B If 'Check the Slums' (page 52) is NOT complete, move the Guards to Silny: Slums. Proceed to page 53, and read Chapter 3.11.

Chapter 3:19 Northern Wood - Vera

Although a less discerning eye might not even notice they were there, you discover markings on a tree pointing northeast. You follow them, eventually discovering another tree with similar markings pointed westward. Following this zig zagging trail, you slowly find your way to Katiya's camp. Katiya makes a hand signal, and the archers you didn't notice in the trees relax their bows. When you reach the center of the camp, you are joined by Ivan, Mara, Alysha and a few others you don't recognize.

"So? What have you learned?" Katiya asks.

"We know that King Chrimata is the one behind the abductions," you explain. "The Kingsguard are abducting the townspeople for him and holding them in Castle Strig. Once they get enough to fill a boat, they ship them off to Razdor."

"There are Koros agents stationed at the Barren Gate," Kharzin says, "so there must be ships anchored just offshore somewhere near here."

"Another thing," you add, "The Koros merchants called King Chrimata a god. It's possible they're just delusional, but it's also possible he's been corrupted by Tenebris."

"What's Tenebris?" Katiya asks.

You look to Kharzin, and he nods. It's time everyone knew the truth. "Tenebris is the force responsible for..."

You are cut off by a horn in the distance. Then another... and another, each one closer than the last.

"We're surrounded!" yells an archer from the trees. "Prepare for battle! Archers, fire at will!"

You gather with the other Guards in the center of the camp while the archers in the trees begin shooting their arrows in all directions. You hear a few distant screams, but then a clear voice calls out from the woods, "Archers, volley!"

Hundreds of arrows slam into the trees surrounding your camp, causing leaves and bodies to rain onto the ground. When the volley ends, your small group of Guards finds itself surrounded by a massive assemblage of Seer zealots, Kingsguard, and fully corrupted soldiers: hundreds against a few dozen. The battle is over.

The army parts, and a man steps into the camp. You recognize First Blade Sacha, leader of the Kingsguard. Though young, his skill with a blade is unparalleled. By all accounts, the sharpness of his mind matches the sharpness of his blade. It's no fluke that he has risen to be King Karst's last line of defense in such a short time.

"This is where your little insurrection comes to an end," Sacha says, addressing the entire camp of rogue Guards. "Your loyalty to Grigory is admirable, but now you will bend the knee to your new master."

Instinctively, you step forward, but Kharzin holds you back. He's right to do so. You are vastly outnumbered. As much as it pains you to admit, you have no choice but to surrender.

Move the Guards to Node 21. Proceed to page 63, and read Chapter 3:20.

Chapter 3:20 Northern Docks - Kharzin

Your hands are bound and a rope is placed around your neck. Each Guard is escorted by two Kingsguard while First Blade Sacha, mounted on a horse of all things, leads the procession down through the mountain paths until you reach the coast. There, you find two massive Koros ships anchored in the shallows, and several rowboats beached on the sand.

Next to the rowboats stands someone out of a nightmare. An unnaturally tall figure whose arms and legs are stretched out of proportion. His face, a pale mask, is too large for his body with eyes that burn a fiery red. The fine silks and rich furs do nothing to hide the inherent eeriness of the man. If anything, the clothes only make him more unsettling, like a monster playacting as a human. When he smiles, his mouth stretches far too wide, revealing row after row of sharpened teeth.

First Blade Sacha dismounts and yanks on the rope around your neck. "Bow to King Chrimata!" he demands. When you refuse, he yanks you so hard that you fall flat on your face in the sand.

"Leave them be," King Chrimata commands. You find yourself wincing at the sound of his deep, resonant voice. His words echo in a way that feels hollow and distant, as if spoken by a man trapped at the bottom of a well.

"Power is a dangerous thing," he says. "I admit I was curious when I learned of two Stonebound running through the streets of Silny."

"Stonebound?" asks Katiya. "You mean Grigory and Alek?"

"Oh, they haven't told you?" Chrimata asks. "These two," he points at you and Vera. "Don't bother denying it. I can sense the power within you."

Suddenly, King Chrimata's body becomes a blur and disappears. When he reappears a moment later he is holding your speaking stones.

"But now that I am face to face with you, I can see that I have wasted my time." He rolls the stones around in his hand before tossing them to Sacha. "You have nothing I want and you won't be turned, so you will be sacrificed. Almost a pity." King Chrimata smiles. "First Blade Sacha will make certain that you arrive in Razdor unharmed. I have matters to attend to in Koros, so I'm afraid I won't be joining you. But fear not, you will be among the first of my offerings to HIM. Many would consider it an honor."

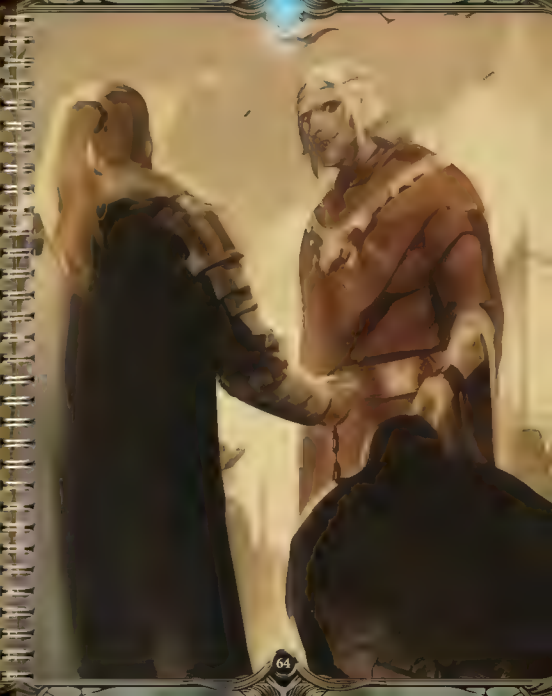
He examines the faces of his prisoners, his eyes settling on Katiya and Ivan. A smile flickers across the edges of the king's lips before his expression hardens, turning lifeless and cold. "These two come with me," he says. Several corrupted soldiers grab them, pulling Katiya and Ivan to their feet.

Katiya: Ivan, we'll come for you!" you shout, as they're being dragged away to one of the rowboats.

"Load them up," First Blade Sacha commands.

Several Kingsguard force you, Vera and the others into the rowboats and shove off towards one of the Koros ships. As soon as you board the vessel, you are marched belowdecks and shoved into the brig.

Move the Guards to Node 82. Proceed to page 65, and read Chapter 3:21.



Chapter 3:21 Sea outside Ryba - Vera

After days of being locked up, your frustration begins to boil over. You begin to pace the cell, mad at yourself for allowing everyone to get captured, and even more mad about losing your speaking stones. You slam your fist into the bars, rattling the cage and earning a look from the Kingsguard on guard duty.

"Relax," Kharzin tells you. "Come sit. There's nothing we can do right now."

"Kharzin, I really don't feel like sitting right now. If you didn't notice, King Chrimata is a literal monster, who, for some reason, is ordering the Kingsguard around like he owns them. He's taken Katya and Ivan, and he's stopping us off to some terrible fate while the rest of the world is going crazy. If we had our speaking stones, we may be able to do something about it, but we don't, so we're stuck in a cage! Excuse me if I don't feel like sitting."

"Is it true that you're Stonebound?" The Kingsguard outside your cell looks at you nervously. It's the first thing he's said to you since being locked up.

You look the man in the eyes, really seeing him for the first time. He's young. He tilts his chin up to look intimidating, but the corners of his mouth are quivering slightly and his eyes flick from side to side. He's nervous. A million possibilities play through your head, but everything depends on this conversation.

"Why do you ask?" you say.

"I've... We've heard stories. Rumors."

"About the Stonebound?" you ask.

The guard falls silent and hangs his head. To your surprise, you hear the Voice whisper to you. "This is Motya. He is a man you can trust."

"Motya?" you say, testing the name on your lips.

Motya lifts his head. "You know my name? How?"

"It was told to me," you begin to explain, but Motya cuts you off, suddenly full of excitement.

"Is it true about Grigory? That he is raising an army of his own, to challenge the king."

"To be honest," you say, "we haven't seen Grigory in a long time, but there is an army of sorts."

Motya fumbles with his keys and unlocks the door to your cell. "Good," he says. "Then consider me a recruit."

You see Kharzin's eyes widen with surprise.

"Why are you doing this Motya?" Kharzin asks.

"Because we're not all bad. There are many in the Kingsguard who don't like what's happening. Many on this ship, in fact."

"Are you talking about mutiny?" you whisper.

In response, Motya lifts a small bag from under his shirt and pours your speaking stones into your hands. "Things are already in motion, we just need a leader."

After gathering your weapons, you, Kharzin, and the other Guards burst onto the upper deck where you are met by a very surprised crew of Kingsguard.

"My brothers and sisters!" Motya yells. "If any of you love Isofar, now is the time to set things right! We have taken an oath to protect Isofar, and we have betrayed her citizens by order of a foreign king. You have all seen the monster he is. Side now with the Stonebound and regain your honor!"

"A pretty speech," First Blade Sacha says, emerging from his quarters. "But you forget yourself. Your loyalty as a Kingsguard belongs to King Karst. He *is* Isofar!"

"Then where is he?" another Kingsguard shouts.

"He's nothing but a puppet!" another yells, before the deck erupts into shouting.

You are pleased to see about half the crew squaring off against the other half.

"Kingsguard!" Sacha bellows above the noise. "Destroy these traitors!"

Battle Event

Place a '4 Star - Kingsguard' and A1 deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield. Place 'Boss - First Blade Sacha' and A1 deck on an enemy deshboard in slot III of the battlefield. **All enemies start battle with 1 Green Evasion Chip.**

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard
If victorious: Proceed to page 67, and read Chapter 3.21 - Victory.

Spirit Boss Challenge C3:3 now unlocked!

Chapter 3:21 Victory

First Blade Sacha is the last to fall, a warrior to the end. You look around at the bodies of those who chose to fight to the death rather than betray their blind loyalty, and feel nothing but regret. Such a waste of life. But then you see the others - those who were willing to challenge their convictions and change the course of their lives. Those who are now looking for new direction. This time, it is Kharzun who gives a speech, though it is a short one.

"You may have heard of the Stonebound," he says. "We are real and we are here before you. We have devoted ourselves to the task of cleansing Isofar of corruption. We will take this ship to Fort Istra where our allies have gathered. When the time is right, we will bring the fight to our enemy, whoever and wherever they are. The Stonebound will take back Isofar or die trying."

END OF CHAPTER 3

Exploration Phase now uses Enemy Index Chapter 4.
See page 13 in the Enemy Index Book.

A new Caravan Quest is available!
Move the Caravan Chip to Node 92. Caravan Quest 3 is now available. **See page 140 in the Quests book.**

New Side Quests are available!
Additional Side Quests are now available for Chapter 4.
See page 57 in the Quests Book.

Place a narrative chip on Fort Istra: Boat Dock (Mini-Map).

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Fort Istra: Boat Dock, proceed to page 69, and read Chapter 4:1.

Chapter 4:1 Fort Istra: Boat Dock - Kharzin

The crew starts the journey to Fort Istra in a celebratory mood. Still exhilarated by their victory, the Guards raid the lower decks for salted meats and bottled wine. They laugh and sing as they man the sails. As the days go on, however, reality sinks in. The songs become a little less lively, and the wine stops flowing. The crew has placed their lives in your hands, betting against all odds that you and Vera actually know what you're doing. You can feel them watching you with a mixture of admiration and concern, wondering what comes next. Any sign of uncertainty on your part would likely cause panic, so you paste on a smile and cheerfully attend to your duties.

Vera approaches you while you're busy tying off a rope. "You don't have to fake it, you know."

"Fake what?" you ask.

"Your eyes and smile don't match," she explains. "It looks... odd."

You allow the muscles around your lips to melt back into a frown and then lean against the rails, staring out into the water. "How many of these soldiers will die under our command?" you ask, keeping your voice barely above a whisper.

Vera stands at your side, staring at the water as it gently slaps against the side of the ship.

"We're giving them a fighting chance," she says. "These days, that's the most anyone could ask for." After a moment, she smiles. "Should we warn them about Dunamis?"

"No," you smile back. "Dunamis can introduce himself."

When you reach the ruins of Fort Istra, Dunamis is waiting for you at the gate. He appears as an ordinary man and escorts your group through the gate. One by one, the soldiers pass through the shimmering air and cry out in surprise when they see Dunamis' true form. Motya falls backward, but then scrambles to his feet, drawing his sword. Dunamis, now a giant in shining golden armor, laughs, and calls to Motya in a loud, booming voice.

"Motya, son of Hamblin. Fear not, you are welcome here!"

One by one, the recruits cautiously step forward to be welcomed by Dunamis into their new life.

Move the Guards to Fort Istra: Barracks. Proceed to page 70, and read Chapter 4:2.

Chapter 4:2 Fort Istra: Barracks - Kharzin

"When you first arrived here, a path was laid out for you," Dunamis says, his voice bouncing off the walls of the common room, making the space seem smaller than it is. "You were both led astray, but have now found your way back. It seems you have a second chance to fulfill your mission. You must travel to Koros and raise an army. We need soldiers for the battle yet to come."

You nod solemnly, a bit embarrassed that Dunamis needs to once again remind you of your quest. Surprisingly, even Vera seems a little abashed.

"It wouldn't hurt to have someone like you tagging along," she suggests. "I bet you'd be pretty helpful in a fight."

Dunamis smiles, his eyes twinkling in amusement. "Each of us has our own role to play," he says. "The time may come when I am forced to take up arms. For now, I fight in other less obvious ways."

"Kellen tells me that the soldiers we brought are progressing nicely in their training," you say. "Perhaps, Mara and Alysha would like to accompany us to Koros?"

"Why do you ask for them specifically?" Dunamis asks.

"Two of their friends were taken by King Chrimata," you answer. "Katiya and Ivan. They are Guards who stayed loyal to Isofar, and fought against Tenebris without even knowing it. I know Mara and Alysha would sacrifice anything to get them back."

"I see," says Dunamis. "Unfortunately, this is a path for you and Vera alone. Mara and Alysha can do the most good by continuing their training here. The time is near when we will need every Stonebound at their best."

"I can't pretend to understand all this talk about different paths, and the future," Vera tells Dunamis. "But, I am learning to trust the Voice. Please tell Mara and Alysha that we will do everything in our power to rescue Katiya and Ivan."

"I can certainly do that," Dunamis says. "Now, you two must get some rest. Your journey to Koros will not be an easy one."

Stonebound have returned from their Commissions. Record gathered materials in the Fort Istra Stash and remove all cubes from the map. Reference page 6 in the Fort Istra & Save Index Book to send out **Commission Five**.

Place a narrative chip on Strofa: The Docks (Mini Map).

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Strofa: The Docks, proceed to page 71, and read Chapter 4:3.

Chapter 4:3 Strofa: The Docks - Vera

You sail upriver, the journey uneventful until you reach Strofa. The plan is to resupply here, and then cross into Korros by land.

Once your vessel is moored, you notice a group of Seer zealots patrolling the docks. Upon seeing you and your crew, they immediately pull you out of the boat and bind your hands, at swordpoint.

"What's going on?" Kharzin demands.

"Strofa is under the control of the Circle," the leader of the group explains. "The transport of weapons is strictly prohibited. Your vessel will be impounded, and you will be detained for further questioning." The other zealots have already started tearing through your ship.

You begin to protest, but then you notice a familiar figure making his way toward you through the docks. He waltzes onto your boat as if he is in no particular hurry, his hands dug deep into his pockets.

"Cid! Help us!" you cry out, before blushing with embarrassment. The Harbormaster is exactly the right person to get you out of your current predicament, but you hadn't intended your greeting to sound quite desperate.

Cid stares at you as if you were a stranger before turning to the zealots.

"They were found with these weapons," the leader of the group states, holding up your bow and quiver.

"Cid," you say, "now that you're here, maybe you can help sort this out. This is clearly a simple misunderstanding."

Cid raises his eyebrows. "Is that so?" He pulls an arrow out of the quiver and fans the fletching with his thumb. "The law is clear," the zealot reminds him, but Cid cuts him off before he has a chance to quote the statute in its entirety.

"We'll take them to the warehouse with the others," Cid says. "I'll handle them."

The zealot nods his head slightly. "Glory to Uvadet."

Glory to Uvadet," Cid answers perfunctorily.

As you're being led down the pier, you lean in close to the Harbormaster, whispering so that the zealots can't hear you. "This isn't funny, Cid. I know we've had our differences, but this is going too far."

Cid grunts noncommittally, refusing to make eye contact.

Uncharacteristically, Kharzin loses his temper. "Traitor!" he snaps. "Don't you see what is happening here? Don't you care?"

A zealot elbows Kharzin in his stomach, knocking the wind out of him. Cid grunts again and continues walking as if nothing had happened. You are forced to follow, hardly believing what's happening.

Move the Guards to Strofa: Warehouse District. Proceed to page 72, and read Chapter 4:4.

Chapter 4:4 Strofa: Warehouse District - Kharzin

You are led inside an enormous warehouse and are immediately overcome with the rank smell of unwashed bodies. In the dim light, you can make out rows of cages lining the walls, each one crammed so full of people that the prisoners barely have room to sit. Cid leads you to one of the cages and unlocks the door while the zealots force the prisoners to the back wall.

"Cid, why are you doing this?" Vera asks.

"Step in, please." Cid answers coldly.

You step into the cage and Cid locks the door behind you. He turns and leads the zealots toward the exit without uttering another word.

"Nice seeing you again!" Vera shouts as Cid slides the warehouse door shut behind him.

Other than a few thin beams of sunlight pouring through holes in the ceiling, the room is cast in darkness. Your eyes barely have time to adjust to the darkness, when a zealot approaches your cage whispering Vera's name. As he enters the light, you recognize him, though he is dressed in rags.

Vera's eyes widen with surprise. "Rolan?"

He smiles, his teeth flashing white. "What does it look like, brainless?" From his palm, he reveals a rusty iron key and flashes a smile.

"What are you doing here?" you demand suspiciously. "Are you a zealot now?"

"I've been working undercover with Cid," he explains. "I wanted to see for myself where they were taking all the prisoners, but I wasn't planning on staying here forever."

Vera curls her lip in disgust. "Cid is the one who brought us here," she explains. "You'd better be sure about him."

Rolan smiles. "I trust him as much as I trust you. Cid is a better actor, that's all. He's had me questioning his loyalties once or twice, but he always comes through in the end."

Rolan quickly slides the guard key into the lock, allowing you and Vera to slip free, before slamming the gate shut. The other prisoners bang against the metal bars, demanding to be released.

"What's the matter with you?!" Vera demands.

"There's a secret exit in the back of the warehouse," Rolan explains, "I can get you out of the city, but we need to move quickly and quietly. We can't afford to release everyone right now, they'll lock down the entire city. It's too big a risk."

"The people here may not be soldiers," you say, "but this is their home. If we lead them, they will fight for it."

Rolan's expression sours. "If we leave the city now, we can come back with reinforcements. You set these people loose, all you're going to do is get them killed. We need to raise an army, not a ragtag group of potato farmers and spice traders."

Choose a path:

A. Free the people in the warehouse.
Proceed to page 73, and read Chapter 4.5.

B. Escape the city with Rolan.
Move the Guards to Strofa: Reconstruction. Proceed to page 74, and read Chapter 4:6.

Chapter 4:5 Strofa: Warehouse District - Vera

Against his better judgment, Rolan unlocks all the cages, setting the citizens free. There are nervous whispers and a few tears as everyone gathers in the middle of the warehouse, not sure what to do next. Kharzin tries to get everyone's attention using hand gestures, while you and Rolan work to keep everyone together.

Be quiet! Kharzin hisses, but his voice is lost in the rising chatter in the crowd.

We need to charge the doors all together!" Kharzin says a little louder, but it's clear he's lost the crowd.

The noise attracts the attention of the zealots outside, and the door on the warehouse's side opens. Two creatures, cat of a nightmare, slip into the warehouse and launch themselves at the group of terrified and snapping teeth. The crowd erupts in panic, and people begin trampling each other desperate to escape. The few zealots guarding the door are all that stand between the mob and freedom.

Battle Event

Place a '4 Star - Dusk Stalker' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I and slot II of the battlefield. Place a '4 Star - Seer Zealot' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot III of the battlefield

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated, Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious Proceed to *Chapter 4:5 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:5 - Victory

When the last of the zealots falls, the villagers pour out into the streets. You follow, only to watch as the first to escape are cut down in a hail of arrows. Taking cover, you spot a robed man leading a large procession of zealots and acolytes down the boulevard.

The Eversacred, someone shouts.

The panicked villagers scatter and the zealots move to block all the exits, but they can't stop everyone. You and Kharzin are followed by Rolan down an open road when you hear the [illegible] behind you. "Traitor!

You look back and see the Eversacred pointing at Rolan as he dressed as a zealot.

You can't escape, traitor! The gates will

Rolan grabs your hand and drags you away from the oncoming guards.

Come on! he shouts. "Don't look back!

As much as you are loath to admit it, he's right. There's nothing you can do to help the villagers now. Your only chance is to run.

Move the Guards to Strofa: Reconstruction. Proceed to page 75, and read Chapter 4:7.

Chapter 4:6 Strofa: Reconstruction - Vera

You follow Rolan through the concealed passage at the back of the warehouse, and end up in a rubbish filled alley.

Do you know where we're going?" you ask Rolan.

As one of the Eversacred, I've known I had time to buy all the burned out buildings, so there are a few news ways out of the city if you don't mind climbing.

After carefully negotiating the maze of back alleys and side streets you arrive at a scaffold and wooden beams and collapsed buildings. Rolan scrambles up the remains of a burned building adjacent to the outer wall of the city. Surprisingly, Kharzin follows, and up the building will relative ease. When you arrive on the roof, a small section of the collapses beneath you, trapping your leg.

Are you okay? Kharzin calls out.

Yeah, I'm fine," you answer. I just need help getting myself out.

Rolan circles back, looking concerned as he carefully helps lift you up out of the hole. Your leg is covered in deep scratches and bruises, but nothing appears to be broken.

"Thanks," you say.

"Don't uhh...don't mention it," Rolan stutters. For a moment, it looks like he might say something else, but then just shakes his head.

We should keep moving," you suggest

"Just up here," Rolan says, pointing to a section of the wall where there is a narrow gap between timbers.

You allow yourself a moment to glance back at the city you are leaving behind. Strange, dark tendrils extend from the Tower of Undiet, stretching over Strofa like the branches of a tree, and there is a heaviness in the air that makes it hard to breathe. In your heart, you vow to return and make things right.

Ok, let's go," you say, just as another portion of the roof collapses, this time beneath Kharzin. He falls, disappearing into a cloud of dust and debris.

"Kharzin!" you shout

Rolan quickly leaps down, searching for your companion in the rubble

Before you have a chance to offer assistance, an arrow lands at your feet. Two acolytes have taken position on the wall above you. One of them leaps down onto the roof, charging forward to meet you in battle

Vera loses 3 HP, Kharzin loses 3 HP.

Battle Event

Place a '4 Star - Seer Acolyte and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase (Vera Only)

If defeated. Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:6 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:6 - Victory

As the acolyte collapses from her injuries, Rolan and Kharzin climb back up onto the roof. Though Kharzin is covered head-to-toe in black ash, his injuries do not appear serious

Another arrow skitters across the roof tiles from the acolyte positioned above you. Below, you hear vicious barking, and see a large group of zealots approaching, accompanied by some kind of strange wolf-like creatures. You race across the roof, squeezing through the gap in the wall and leap down into the grass on the other side.

Kharzin and Rolan land next to you, and you all run west, as fast your legs can carry you.

Move the Guards to Node 53. Proceed to page 76, and read Chapter 4:8.

Chapter 4:7 Strofa: Reconstruction - Vera

As soon as you're out of sight of the Eye, Rolan leads you off the main street and into an alley. After a series of confusing twists and turns, you arrive at a section of the city full of scorched wooden beams and collapsed buildings.

"They haven't repaired these houses after the last Falmundian raid," Rolan explains. The Circle will have guards at the gates, but there are a few new holes in the wall here." Rolan scrambles up the remains of a blackened building adjacent to the outer wall of the city. Surprisingly Kharzin follows Rolan up the building with relative ease. When you arrive on the roof, a small section of the tile collapses beneath you, trapping your leg.

"Are you okay?" Kharzin calls out.

"Yeah, I'm fine," you answer. "I just need help getting my leg out."

Rolan circles back, looking concerned as he carefully helps lift you up out of the hole. Your leg is covered in deep scratches and bruises, but nothing appears to be broken.

"Thanks," you say.

"Don't uhh...don't mention it," Rolan stutters. For a moment, it looks like he might say something else, but then just shakes his head.

"We should keep moving," you suggest.

"Just up here," Rolan says, pointing to a section of the wall where there is a narrow gap between timbers.

You allow yourself a moment to glance back at the city you are leaving behind. Strange, dark tendrils extend from the Tower of Undet, stretching over Strofa like the branches of a tree, and there is a heaviness in the air that makes it hard to breathe. Even from this distance you can hear the zealots hunting down the people in the streets. In your heart, you vow to return and make things right.

"Okay, let's go," you say.

Following Rolan, you squeeze through the gap in the wall and leap down into the grass on the other side.

"I know it wasn't easy leaving those people behind," Rolan admits. "I've been recognized as a sympathizer, but Cid is still undercover. He should still have some influence. He'll do what he can to help them."

"He can't do it alone," Kharzin says. "We're headed to Koros to raise an army. Things aren't just bad in Strofa, the corruption has spread all over Isofar."

Rolan nods his head. "Then lead the way. There's no time to lose."

Vera loses 3 HP.

Move the Guards to Node 53. Proceed to page 76, and read Chapter 4:8.

Chapter 4:8 Torgovat Bridge - Kharzin

As the main trade route between Koros and Isofar, Torgovat Bridge is usually teeming with long lines of travelers and merchants from both countries. Now, however, the bridge is empty, save for the Guards at the checkpoint. You're still some distance from the bridge, but the Guards have already spotted you. It would look suspicious to turn back now.

"I was hoping we could sneak in with the normal crowd," you say. "Now, I don't know. This may end in a fight."

Suddenly, Rolan grabs Vera's arm and pulls it behind her back.

"Hey! What are you doing?" Vera whispers furiously, trying not to alarm the Guards.

"Play along," Rolan whispers back. "Kharzin, grab Vera's other arm."

"You better have a really good explanation for this," Vera warns.

"Sorry about this," you whisper, as you pin Vera's other arm behind her back.

"Yes, we're all very sorry," Rolan says. "Now, let me do the talking before you two get us all killed."

As you approach the bridge, two Guards step forward to meet you while the others stay back on the bridge.

"What's this?" one of the Guards asks, eyeing Rolan's zealot robes.

"Delivery for King Chrimata," Rolan says. "She's been nothing but trouble, stirring the other prisoners up in Strofa. The Eye thought it'd be best to give her up as an offering. You know, separate the rotten apples."

The Guard sizes Vera up before turning back to Rolan. "She doesn't look like much trouble to me."

"Underestimate her at your own risk. She convinced some of the prisoners to riot. Ended up sending a couple zealots to the healer. That's why HE'S here," Rolan says, nodding to you.

You're not sure if you should talk or not, so you just end up grunting, which earns an eye roll from Rolan.

"Anyways," continues Rolan, "that's why Cid wants her gone. Gets her out of our hair and gets on King Chrimata's good side."

"Is this approved by the overseer?" the Guard asks.

"Are you kidding?" Rolan says. "We can't bother the overseer with this. He's up in his tower doing...whatever it is he's doing. Cid's just trying to keep everything running smoothly."

A moment passes while the Guard considers Rolan's words. You subconsciously grip your spear a little tighter, but the Guard finally steps aside.

"Let them through," he calls out to the other Guards.

As you pass, the Guard leans in to offer a warning. "Between you and me, I've heard some bad things about King Chrimata. I'd try to stay on his good side if I were you."

"Okay Rolan, what do you know about King Chrimata?" Vera demands as soon as you're across the bridge.

"Whoa there." Rolan says, his hands in the air. "Not a whole lot. The zealots were talking about him. Apparently, he's become some kind of self proclaimed deity. The Circle has been shipping some of the prisoners to him in Koros. Between him and the overseer up in his tower, things are getting pretty scary for us little guys."

"What overseer?" you ask.

"You didn't see the tower in Strofa? Big black tendrils? A pall of death in the air?"

"Yeah, I saw it, but didn't have time to arrange a tour on account of us being locked up," Vera replies, crisply.

"No need for sarcasm, Vera. I'm on your side. Besides, I got you out."

"You did," Vera admits. "And now we're here in Koros. I don't suppose you would know where to go to raise an army around here?"

"No," Rolan laughs. "But there is a mining town near here. We can poke in and get the lay of the land."

"Seems like a fine idea," you say. "Vounu it is."

Place a narrative chip on Vounu: Crossroads Path (Mini Map).

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Vounu: Crossroads Path, proceed to page 77, and read Chapter 4:9.

Chapter 4:9 Vouno: Crossroads Path - Vera

You weren't sure what you were expecting from your first visit to a Koros town, but it wasn't this. The road leading into Vouno is crowded with wagons of all shapes and sizes. Some of the wagons have banded together and strung pennants between them to form a makeshift camp. There are merchants with small tables hawking their wares, and musicians wandering through the crowd, hoping to earn a few coins. There are even a few artists at their easels, painting small portraits for a modest fee.

When you try to make your way into the town proper, you discover the reason so many travelers are forced to camp outside of town; guards are blocking the road.

"No visitors, by order of the archon," one of the guards says, slamming his spear into the ground.

"Take it easy, friend," Rolan says, raising his hands in a defensive posture. "We're not here to make trouble. Perhaps we can even be of some assistance."

The guard's eyes narrow with suspicion. "We've had a problem in the mines. Nothing we can't handle, but it would be dangerous to outsiders until we've cleared things up."

"If it was really something you could handle," you quip, "I doubt you'd need to cordon off the entire town."

The guard shoots you a menacing look, but before it can get further, Kharzin steps forward.

"We are Guards from Isofar," he explains. "I am certain your soldiers are more than up to the task, but if there is trouble, there is no dishonor in letting us help you."

The guard sneers. "And what 'help' can you offer, old man?"

Kharzin smiles. "You'd be surprised." He extends his arm and a spear made of pure light appears in his hand. At first, it is so dazzling that the Koros guards are forced to shield their eyes. They gasp in amazement and speak excitedly amongst themselves.

All signs of suspicion and animosity rapidly melt away. The guard bows his head slightly out of respect.

"Please," he says, "follow me."

"Where are you taking us?" Rolan demands.

"We are taking you to see the king!" the guard explains excitedly. "He's been looking for you!"

Move the Guards to Vouno: Archon's Hall. Proceed to page 78, and read Chapter 4:10.

Chapter 4:10 Vouno: Archon's Hall - Kharzin

As you near the Archon's Hall, you see members of the elite Koros guard known as the Fylakes. Their uniforms are more ceremonial than practical. They wear long blue capes that would only get in the way in a fight. Their tall shields are solid and painted to look pretty, but they are also cumbersome. They'd provide good cover, but if you tried to drag one across a field of battle, it would weigh you down.

"Halt," one of the Fylakes tells the guard. "Where are you taking these three?"

"To King Ploutos," the guard answers, "on urgent business. Look for yourself, the prophecies are true!"

You summon your spear again, and can't help but grin when the Fylakes' eyes widen ever-so-slightly.

"One moment," says one of the Fylakes. He enters the hall, leaving you to wait outside. He returns a moment later and bids you to follow him. You are escorted into a large hall, where King Ploutos is seated at the end of a long wooden table, surrounded by advisors and guards. He rises when he sees you. Out of respect, you bow your heads.

When he moves toward you, his entourage follows him across the hall.

"Stonebound," he says with a smile. "I can scarcely believe it. I must say, I am delighted to make your acquaintance. You've come at a most opportune time."

"What brings a king of Koros to Vouno of all places?" Vera demands.

Your body stiffens. Vera's tone, if not exactly rude, lacks the formality and deference one would expect when address ng a king but if Ploutos is offended he doesn't show it. He takes her question in stride.

"Production has stopped," he explains. "That's an even bigger threat to my kingdom than an invading army. Production is everything. The locals seem to think there is a monster in the mines. A creature unlike anything they've ever seen. I don't know about all that, but I do know that I am losing miners. And money."

You try to suppress a flash of irritation. The king is more concerned with gold than the lives of his citizens. Perhaps, you remind yourself, that is simply the Koros way. A strange people, who value trade and profits above all else.

"Believe it or not," the king adds, "I've been expecting you. The Balance predicted the Stonebound many years ago. I've had scouts and spies searching for you ever since. So, after many years of fruitless searching, you can imagine my surprise when you simply drop in unannounced to pay me a visit."

As the king speaks, you find yourself becoming increasingly uncertain of his intentions. "What do you want with the Stonebound?" you ask.

"To hire them, of course! The scales must be balanced! How much do you charge for your services?"

Just as you are about to lose your temper, and tell him that 'the Stonebound cannot be bought', Vera chimes in.

"We'll solve your production problem," she says, "if you lend us some of your soldiers. Isofar is in peril. If your army were to assist us, you would also be assisting yourselves."

The king's eyes widen with surprise, and for the first time he shows signs of irritation. "A steep price indeed," he says, "and exactly how many soldiers do you think the two of you are worth?"

"How many soldiers have you lost in the mine?" Vera fires back. "And how many more will you lose if something isn't done?"

The king nods thoughtfully. "An interesting proposal," he admits. "First, help me with my problems in the mines. Then we'll see how many soldiers I can spare."

"Can you tell us anything more about these 'monsters'?"

"Very little," the king admits. "Speak with a man named Gilbert at the clayhorn pens. He is one of the very few to return from the mines."

Place a narrative chip on Vouno: Clayhorn Pen.

Begin exploration phase.

Upon arrival at Vouno: Clayhorn Pen, proceed to page 80, and read Chapter 4:11.

Chapter 4:12 Vouno: Shaft Two - Kharzin

The entrance to shaft two lies abandoned at the edge of town, the black void of the cave standing in stark contrast to the bright midday sun.

"You wait here," you tell Rolan. "If we aren't back in half an hour, go to town and tell them what happened."

"Something in the mines is killing people," Rolan says, "and we need to put an end to it. I may not be Stoneborn, but I can do more good by your side."

You turn to Vera, eyebrow raised. "What do you think?"

"It's your life." Vera tells Rolan. "Are you sure you want to risk it exploring some random cave in Koros?"

"We're doing this for Isofar, right?" Rolan asks. "We find out what happened here, and King Ploutos gives us an army to help clean up our home. I can think of worse things to do for it."

"Nobody's going to die," you say. "That being said, at the first sign of trouble, I need you to get out. Rolan. You can be our way if it comes to a fight."

"Understand," agrees Rolan. "First sign of danger and I'm gone."

With that settled, you step into the mine. The opening chamber is wide enough to accommodate the clayhorns that pull the mining carts into town, but the further you travel, the narrower the tunnel gets. Soon, you are forced to walk single file. After some debate, you allow Vera to take the lead. Rolan seems more than content to take the rear.

Suddenly, the earth shakes, and a barrage of dirt and shale rains down on your head. The next tremor is more violent, causing the ceiling to cave in behind you, and trapping Rolan on the other side.

"I'm alright!" he shouts faintly. "I'll get help! Perhaps the king's men can clear the debris."

That's when you hear it. A roar that seems to ripple from the belly of the earth. A creature with fiery red eyes emerges from the darkness and slowly makes its way towards you, its massive horns scraping the ceiling. It pauses a few paces away, its glowing red chest heaving, before roaring again and charging straight at you.

Battle Event

Place 'Boss - Vouno Mines Creature' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:12 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:12 - Victory

The creatures body hisses as if its pores were releasing steam. Then its chest bursts open a fiery liquid resembling molten lava flowing out of its corpse and pooling on the cavern floor.

Deeper in the mines, you discover a cavern filled with metal cages hanging from iron chains attached to the ceiling.

A hand reaches out from one of them, grabbing Vera by the wrist and pulling her towards the bars. The man trapped within has gray skin and bright red eyes. The brown hair on his head and chin appear to be shedding, even the slightest movement causing a fresh shower of strands to fall to the floor. His throat glows brightly red, and speaking seems to cause him great pain.

"Please," he says. "Kill me."

Voices from the other cages cry out with similar demands. Though transformed nearly beyond recognition, it is clear that these are the missing Koros soldiers.

Vera frees herself from the man's grip and pulls a speaking stone from her pocket.

Proceed to page 82, and continue reading Chapter 4:12 - Victory.

Chapter 4:12 - Victory (cont.)

What are you doing?" you ask.

She closes her eyes in concentration. "These men are not yet beyond saving."

For a moment, the room darkens. Then, a sphere of light appears in the center of the cavern, growing rapidly until it fills the entire room, momentarily blinding you.

When your sight is restored, Vera has already begun prying open the cages. Grateful prisoners, restored to their true forms, emerge from their cages with shouts of joy, weeping in relief.

"Those monsters killed a few of us," one of them explains, "but most of us were brought here and locked up. I could feel myself turning into one of them. Slipping away, like I was losing my mind."

Who's behind this?" you ask. "Did you ever see anyone else?"

It was King Chrimata," another soldier answers. He would visit us in the cages and talk about how we were going to be his army."

"Asweet now," Vera says. "You're all going home."

"Begging your pardon Ma'am," says the soldier, "but this won't be over until King Chrimata is dead."

You guide the freed prisoners out of the mines, finding that the cave-in has been cleared. One of the Fylakes meets you at the entrance.

"Your friend, Rolan, was injured in the cave in," he explains. "We're treating him in town." He crawled on his hands and knees through the tunnel to find help. He was more concerned about your safety than his own injuries. You are lucky to have such a friend."

Move the Guards to Vouno: Archon's Hall. Proceed to page 83, and read Chapter 4:13.

Chapter 4:13 Vouno: Archon's Hall - Vera

When King Ploutos sees the liberated soldiers, he smiles and claps his hands

"We will hold a feast in honor of the Stonebound tonight!"

"I'm afraid there is no time for feasting just yet, King Ploutos," you say. "There's more to this story than the recovery of lost miners."

"Explain," King Ploutos demands, looking from you to Kharzin.

"It was Chrimata, m'lord," one of the soldiers volunteers. "He turned us into beasts."

"Turned you...I don't understand," Ploutos says.

"There is a force called Tenebris," Kharzin explains. "It has the power to corrupt anything it touches. King Chrimata is just one of many who has fallen under its sway. He has found a way to turn ordinary people into monsters."

"He visited us in our cages," one of the soldiers says. "I couldn't make out his face, just a voice whispering to us in the darkness. Then, when we started to change, Chrimata said he was making us better. Said we needed to be strong for the coming war."

"Not everyone is accounted for," one of the others chimes in. "Some are still trapped in the mines."

"And we won't rest until they are found," you assure him.

King Ploutos shakes his head. "This is a lot to take in, and what you say is true. Chrimata must be stopped. It's possible he is not yet aware we've learned of his scheme. If so, we have a small window of opportunity. His castle is part of here in the mountains. We should strike now, before he has a chance to prepare. We delay at our own ri

Choose a path:

A. Free the remaining soldiers from the mine.
Proceed to page 84, and read Chapter 4:14.

B. Go straight to Chrimata.
Move the Guards to Node 36. Proceed to page 87, and read Chapter 4:17

Chapter 4:14 Vouno: Shaft One - Kharzin

The king's words are not without wisdom, but even in dire circumstances you are not in the habit of leaving soldiers behind. Not when they might still be saved.

King Ploutos seemed slightly irritated with your decision, but he had little choice but to offer his blessing, especially when you reminded him that more of the beasts could come pouring out of the mines at any moment.

After a few hours exploring the first mine shaft, you discover more cages but no bodies. The tunnel ahead of you has caved-in, and you slowly clear the debris.

"Is anyone there?" Vera calls out. "If you can hear my voice, hold on, we're coming."

Unfortunately, you find only bodies beneath the rubble. A group of miners. No survivors.

Then, something moves in the shadows behind the debris. Before you even have time to raise your weapons, it strikes.

Battle Event

Place a '4 Star - Cave Stalker' and A1 deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:14 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:14 - Victory

Even as you kill the Cave Stalker, several more of its kind scurry forward through the rubble. You summon a spear of light and hurl it into the ceiling, causing a second cave-in, and burying the spiders in falling rocks.

"Nothing but spiders here," you tell Vera. "Let's check the other shaft."

Move the Guards to Vouno: Shaft Three. Proceed to page 85, and read Chapter 4:15.

Chapter 4:15 Vouno: Shaft Three - Vera

There are a few slight tremors when you enter the next shaft. By now, you are so accustomed to the ground shifting beneath your feet that you barely notice.

After a thorough search, you discover more cages, but they stand empty. A few of the bars have been bent as if something pried its way through before escaping into the mines.

The ground shakes, more violently this time, causing you to stumble. Instead of receding, the shaking grows worse, and a Zhuk rumbles through the tunnel. You barely have time to react before the panicked Zhuk strikes at you.

Battle Event

Place a '3 Star - Armored Zhuk' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard..

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:15 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:15 - Victory

You defeat the Zhuk, but something still feels off.

"It seemed scared," you say. "I've never heard of Zhuks attacking people."

Kharzin shrugs. "It may have been spooked by the tremors."

You shake your head. "No, it was running from something. It came out of that tunnel, over there."

"Okay, let's go slowly," Kharzin says. "And hope we don't have to fight something that can scare a Zhuk."

Proceed to page 86, and read Chapter 4:16.

Chapter 4:16 Vouno: Shaft Three - Kharzin

The tunnel widens, leading out into a cavern with more cages. They are filled with miners and soldiers with ashen gray skin. Their throats and stomachs glow red, as if a fire burned within, and they clamor against the bars, frantically trying to escape.

At the center of the cavern, a speaking stone floats in midair and radiates a dark energy. Tendrils of black and purple smoke snake their way through the cages, ramming themselves down the throats of the prisoners as if to force feed them the stone's own dark power.

You charge forward, shattering the dark speaking stone with your spear of radiant light. With a hiss and a scream, the tendrils retract back into the stone, and it shatters, dropping lifelessly to the floor. Picking through the shards, you discover that only the hardened shell of the stone was destroyed. Within its shattered remains, the true speaking stone, uncorrupted by Tenebris, is revealed.

Obtain: Obsidian (Speaking Stone)

Free of the dark stone's influence, the prisoners gradually return to their human form, and you and Vera quickly release them from their cages.

As the last prisoner is freed, the ground shakes so violently that many of the prisoners are thrown to the floor. Suddenly, a crazed Zhuk bursts through the wall behind you, sending rock shards flying through the air. Another Zhuk follows, and then another, until the whole cavern is filled with Zhuks.

"Run!" you shout, but most of the freed prisoners have already begun to scramble into the tunnels. Those unlucky enough to be standing close to the cavern wall when it exploded are trampled by the swarm.

As you race through the tunnels, the ground continues to quake. You avoid glancing back, but you know that the Zhuks are hot on your heels.

The tunnels shake so violently that one of the prisoners next to you falls flat on her face. Turning back, you watch as she is consumed by the tidal wave of Zhuks. Vera glances back, breaking her run, but you grab her arm.

"There's nothing you can do!" you shout. "We must warn the town!"

Move the Guards to Vouno: Town Square. Proceed to page 90, and read Chapter 4:20.

Chapter 4:17 Mining Path - Kharzin

As much as you hate the thought of leaving those soldiers behind, you know all too well that sacrifices must be made in times of war. King Ploutos was pleased with your decision, sending his best soldiers to accompany you.

You make your way up the mountain pass. It's a slightly longer route, but it's less treacherous than traveling through the mines.

Out of earshot of the Koros soldiers, Vera voices her concerns about your mission.

"What's to prevent Ploutos from going back on his promise?" she asks. "Even if we kill Chrimata, he could just decide to send us home empty handed. There wouldn't be anything we could do to stop him."

"I admit, the thought crossed my mind, but I don't see that there is any other choice," you offer with a shrug. "The fate of Isofar may very well be determined by the king's code of honor. We can only hope he is a man of his word."

You hear shouts up ahead from a few of the Koros soldiers. As you run up the sloping mountain trail, you discover another beast blocking your path.

Battle Event

Place 'Boss - Vouno Mines Creature' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:17 - Victory*.

Chapter 4:17 - Victory

A few of the Koros soldiers do not survive the battle. Those who do seem shaken. They were trained to fight soldiers, not monsters.

Vera leans against a boulder as she tries to catch her breath. "Exactly how many more of these things are there?"

"I don't know," you say, "but every second we waste, Chrimata could be making more. We need to keep moving."

Move the Guards to Node 24. Proceed to page 88, and read Chapter 4:18.

Chapter 4:18 Silver Mine - Vera

The mountain path eventually weaves its way back into the caverns.

"There's no way to avoid the caves entirely," one of the Koros soldiers explains. "We'll have to cut through."

Almost the moment you enter the tunnels, the ground begins to shake, knocking one of the soldiers to the ground. A terrified Zhuk scurries out of a tunnel and barrels toward your group. Out of panic, one of the soldiers strikes it with his sword, sending the creature into a frenzy.

Battle Event

Place a '3 Star - Armored Zhuk' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated. Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:18 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:18 - Victory

You manage to kill the first Zhuk, but as you do so, another one scurries by. And then another.

"Let them pass," Kharzin warns. The soldiers dutifully obey his command.

"It's not the Zhuks that should concern you," you tell them. "It's what they're running *from* that we should worry about."

This unsettles a few of the soldiers, but each of them finds the courage to follow you deeper into the tunnels.

Move the Guards to Node 23. Proceed to page 89, and read Chapter 4:19.

Chapter 4:19 Leilasia Caverns - Vera

You continue your journey until you reach a cavern filled with Zhuks. They hang from the walls and ceiling and cover the floor. At the center of the room, set atop a pedestal, you see a strange glowing stone surrounded by a black and purple mist. The Zhuks seem to be in some sort of trance. Their eyes are closed, and they sway back and forth in unison, almost as if they were pushed by the same imaginary breeze. Every so often, the stone in the center of the room pulses, and the Zhuks make frantic clicking noises and scuttle their feet.

As you observe this routine, you notice the Zhuks are slowly starting to change. Their shells are darkening and they seem to be growing larger.

Nearly as entranced as the Zhuks, one of the soldiers takes a step forward to get a better look at the dark stone. As he does so, one of the Zhuks awakens, its eyes flaring to life.

Battle Event

Place a '4 Star - Tenebris Zhuk' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:19 - Victory.*

Chapter 4:19 - Victory

Though you win the battle, the commotion has disturbed the rest of the swarm. One-by-one the Zhuks open their eyes and scurry towards you down the tunnel.

"Run!" Kharzin shouts, but the soldiers have already started to flee. The frantic clicking noises of the Zhuks grow so loud that they become nearly deafening. The tunnels shake so violently that one of the soldiers falls flat on his face. Turning back, you watch in horror as he is consumed by the swarm.

"There's nothing you can do for him!" Kharzin shouts. "We have to warn the town!"

Move the Guards to Vouno: Town Square. Proceed to page 90, and read Chapter 4:20.

Chapter 4:20 Vouno: Town Square - Kharzin

You race down the path and head toward the town square. The earthquakes have brought residents out of their homes and into the streets, where they nervously wait for the tremors to die down. You shout to warn them, but you already know it's too late. You glance behind you and see Zhuks erupting from the mountain. You watch in horror as the entire face of the mountain detaches and begins sliding toward the village, the Zhuks swimming through the avalanche like whales in a sea of stone.

Operating purely on instinct, you stand in the path of certain death and stretch out your hands. Uncertain what you can do to stop the mountain's fury, you find yourself shouting, over and over again, "Shield! Shield! Shield!"

You feel power shoot out of you, and an enormous radiant barrier ripples across the surface of the mountain, redirecting the avalanche away from the town. The Zhuks that crash into your barrier are killed instantly, dissolving in a radiant burst of light.

Your head is pounding and your muscles ache. You grit your teeth, maintaining the barrier until every last pebble has stopped rolling. The barrier flickers out, and you collapse in exhaustion, but there is no time to recover. The swarm is upon you.

Battle Event

Place a '4 Star - Tenebris Zhuk' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot I of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

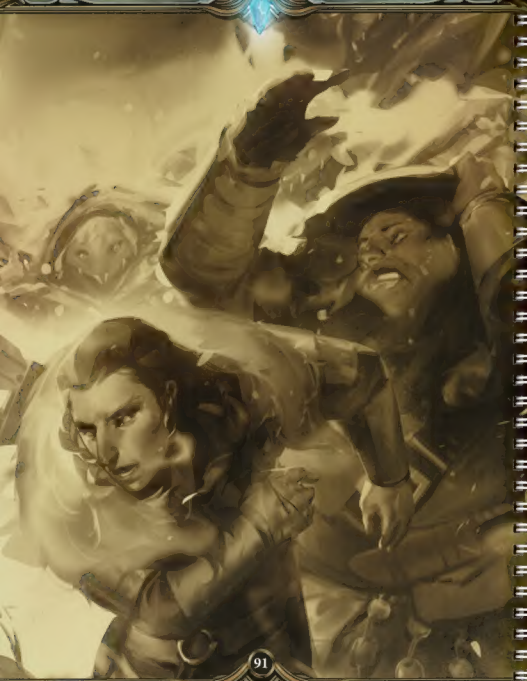
If victorious: Proceed to Chapter 4:20 - Victory.

Chapter 4:20 - Victory

After you slay the corrupted Zhuk, you take a look around. The Fylakes have slain several others, and even the townspeople have joined the fight, but many died in the battle and much of Vouno has been left in ruins.

King Ploutos approaches, his face red with anger. "Chrimata will pay for this," he says. "Bring me his head, and my entire army will be at your disposal."

Move the Guards to Node 8. Proceed to page 92, and read Chapter 4:21.



Chapter 4:21 Leilasia Caverns - Vera

"Ow!" You hop on one foot, trying to rub your stubbed toe through your boots. "I'm really sick of this stupid cave!"

"If there's one thing I know about caves," replies Kharzin, "it's that they're full of rocks. How's your toe?"

"It'll be fine," you say, gingerly testing out a step. "I just want to be out of this cave. It feels like we've been here forever."

"Honestly, we're lucky these caves didn't collapse completely," Kharzin says. "After the avalanche, I wasn't sure anything would be left. I wouldn't want to make this trip above ground. Still a lot of loose rock up there."

"Vouno is lucky you were there. How did you do that, by the way? With the shield?"

"I didn't do it," replies Kharzin. "I just called out, and the Voice worked through me."

"Well, it was pretty amazing," you say. "Makes me wish I had trained longer in Fort Istra."

"We'll be back soon enough," Kharzin says. "With an army."

You nod your head. "We just have to take care of a monster first."

"Speaking of monsters…" Kharzin trails off.

You discover a cavern with more cages. The unfortunate souls in the cages appear not to have survived the transformation, trapped somewhere between human and beast. You cover your mouth with your shoulder, partly to shield yourself from the stench, and partly to hide your horror.

"Careful," Kharzin warns, pointing to a few empty cages. "Some of these people may have survived the transformation."

As if on cue, a beast emerges from the shadows.

Battle Event

Place 'Boss - Vouno Mines Creature' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:21 - Victory* below.

Chapter 4:21 - Victory

As you walk past cage after cage filled with the corpses of Koros miners and soldiers, a rage wells up inside of you.

"I don't care what happens to me anymore," you tell Kharzin. "Chrimata will pay for what he's done. If we die in these mountains, so be it. But not until these people have been avenged."

Kharzin lays a hand on your shoulder. "Steel yourself," he says. "We need to win this battle, but there are even bigger battles ahead of us."

Move the Guards to Node 6. Proceed to page 93, and read Chapter 4:22.

Chapter 4:22 Exousia Castle - Kharzin

You finally exit the caves and find yourself on the side of a mountain. The cold air is thin and burns your lungs when you breathe. You wrap a cloth around your nose and mouth and set off up the steep mountain trail. By the time you make it to the top, the sky has darkened and a light snow begins to fall.

Chrimata's castle stands before you, an imposing fortress carved into the mountain. The only entrance is a small gate surrounded by two turrets that jut out from the cliff face. Anyone approaching the castle would be cut down by arrows long before reaching the gate. If the castle were fully garrisoned, it would be impregnable. Instead, you find it practically abandoned. Some of the same beasts that you encountered in the mines guard the entrance, but they are sick and exhausted. One roars weakly when it sees you, briefly attempting to stand before slumping back down into the snow.

A number of corrupted zhuks have also met their end here, their husks shriveled and dried out. A sad end for such magnificent creatures.

"They transformed too quickly," Vera muses. "Their bodies couldn't handle the stress."

A single figure approaches you from the castle, weaving through the field of corpses with an ethereal grace. Whatever was once human about Chrimata, whatever was living and vital, is gone. In his place is a walking corpse. The corrupted merchant king is at least eight feet tall and skeletally thin. An open smile seems permanently affixed to his face, revealing an arsenal of long, sharp fangs.

"I gave him everything and he made me a god," Chrimata whispers. "Then, he gave me an army and bid me to fight for him. We were supposed to be invincible..." Chrimata trails off and stares at you with empty eyes. Suddenly his face contorts in rage. "I sent an entire mountain crashing down on your heads! Why won't you just die!?"

Battle Event

Place 'Boss - King Chrimata' and AI deck on an enemy dashboard in slot 1 of the battlefield.

Begin Battle Phase

If defeated: Place the Guards back at most recent checkpoint or Fort Istra Courtyard.

If victorious: Proceed to *Chapter 4:22 - Victory* below.

Spirit Boss Challenge C3:4 now unlocked!

Chapter 4:22 - Victory

You plunge your spear into Chrimata's heart, and the merchant king lets out one last shriek of pain before sliding to the ground. The little that remains of his skin suddenly begins to bubble and boil until it has burned away, leaving nothing behind but a skeletal frame and tattered robes.

"What a waste," you say. "All the wealth in the world, and armies at his command, yet he still wanted more. Imagine what he could have accomplished. Instead he dies alone at the top of the world."

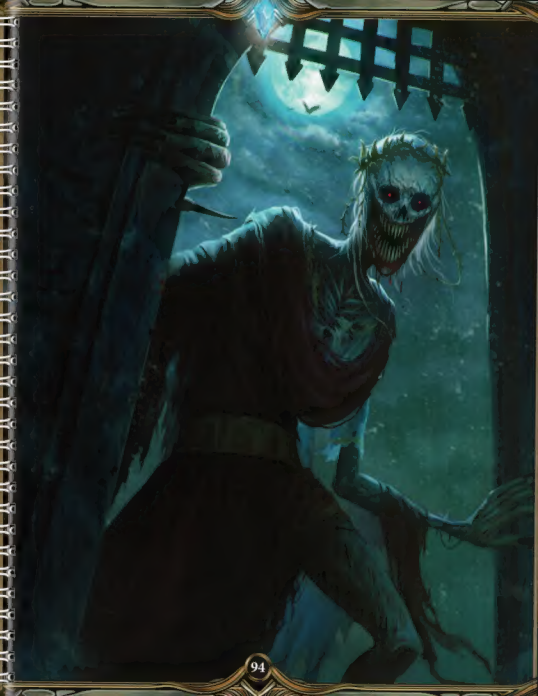
"Any sympathy I may have had died in those mines," Vera says. "What he did to those people was unforgivable."

You nod thoughtfully. "Did he have a choice? Could he have resisted Tenebris if he tried?" The question hangs in the air awkwardly without an answer.

"We should check the castle," Vera suggests. "See if Katiya and Ivan..." Vera's voice breaks off and you wrap an arm around her shoulder.

"We'll find them," you promise.

Proceed to page 95, and read Chapter 4:23.



Chapter 4:23 Exousia Castle - Vera

The inside of the castle has the feel of a crypt. Strange corpses litter the floor, forgotten where they fell. Some of them are recognizable as familiar animals, but most are twisted and distorted into something unnatural. No doubt these are the results of Chrimuta's failed experimentation.

You make your way through the cold stone halls, listening for any signs of life, but all is silent. As you move towards the back of the castle, you begin to see signs of habitation; a few pieces of furniture, shelves of books, and piles of ink stained papers. You push your way through an ornate wooden door and find yourself in a richly furnished bedroom. A large canopied bed dominates the center of the room, and thick carpets line the floor. In the corner, you spot a cage with two figures huddled together.

"Katiya! Ivan!" you yell, running over to the cage. "Please be alive!"

Kharzin summons his spear and slices through the bars of the cage, sending them clanging to the floor. You reach in and gently shake Katiya's shoulder. Relief floods your veins as Katiya and Ivan stir, and slowly sit up.

"Vera?" Katiya questions.

"Yes!" you laugh, throwing your arms around Katiya and Ivan.

"What's going on?" Ivan asks groggily.

"I told you we'd come for you," Kharzin says. "Now, let's get you both out of here."

Move the Guards to Vouno: Archon's Hall. Proceed to page 96, and read Chapter 4:24.

Chapter 4:24 Vouno: Archon's Hall - Kharzin

When you arrive back at the Archon's Hall, you receive a hero's welcome. King Ploutos orders a halt to the rebuilding efforts so that the entire town can attend a celebratory feast. The Fylakes, dressed in their finest ceremonial garb, seat you and Vera next to Katiya and Ivan at the King's table. You are pleased to see that Rolan has recovered enough to join the feast.

The soldiers and miners you freed from Tenebris' grasp are given seats of honor at the front of the hall. Several of the villagers seem eager to wait on you hand and foot. They refill your glasses to the brim each time you take a single sip, and keep your plates piled high with salted meats and potatoes.

When the musicians begin playing, you all take to the dance floor spinning, stomping, clapping and laughing the night away. For a blissful moment, you are at peace. But then you see the messenger speaking to King Ploutos. You notice the way King Ploutos' smile fades away and his eyes narrow. Your heart drops when King Ploutos rises from his seat and the musicians stop playing.

"Tonight, our celebrations should be spirited," he announces. "Unfortunately, they must also be brief. I have bad word from Isofar. The great city of Razdor has fallen."

A collective gasp rises from the crowd, followed by nervous chatter. But the king holds up his hand to continue.

"I would be a foolish king to think that we are insulated from the problems arising in Isofar. This new threat casts a long shadow, and if we stand idly by, the darkness will consume us all." The king turns toward you. "You will have your army," he says. "Every man and woman I can spare. You did not fail them, and I will not fail you."

With that, he raises his glass. "To Isofar."

The gathered soldiers raise their cups and repeat the king's words. "To Isofar!"

END OF CAMPAIGN 3

Record final stats of Kharzin and Vera in the 'End of Save Index' in the Fort Istra and Save Index Book on page 85.

Continue the story by proceeding to Campaign 4!